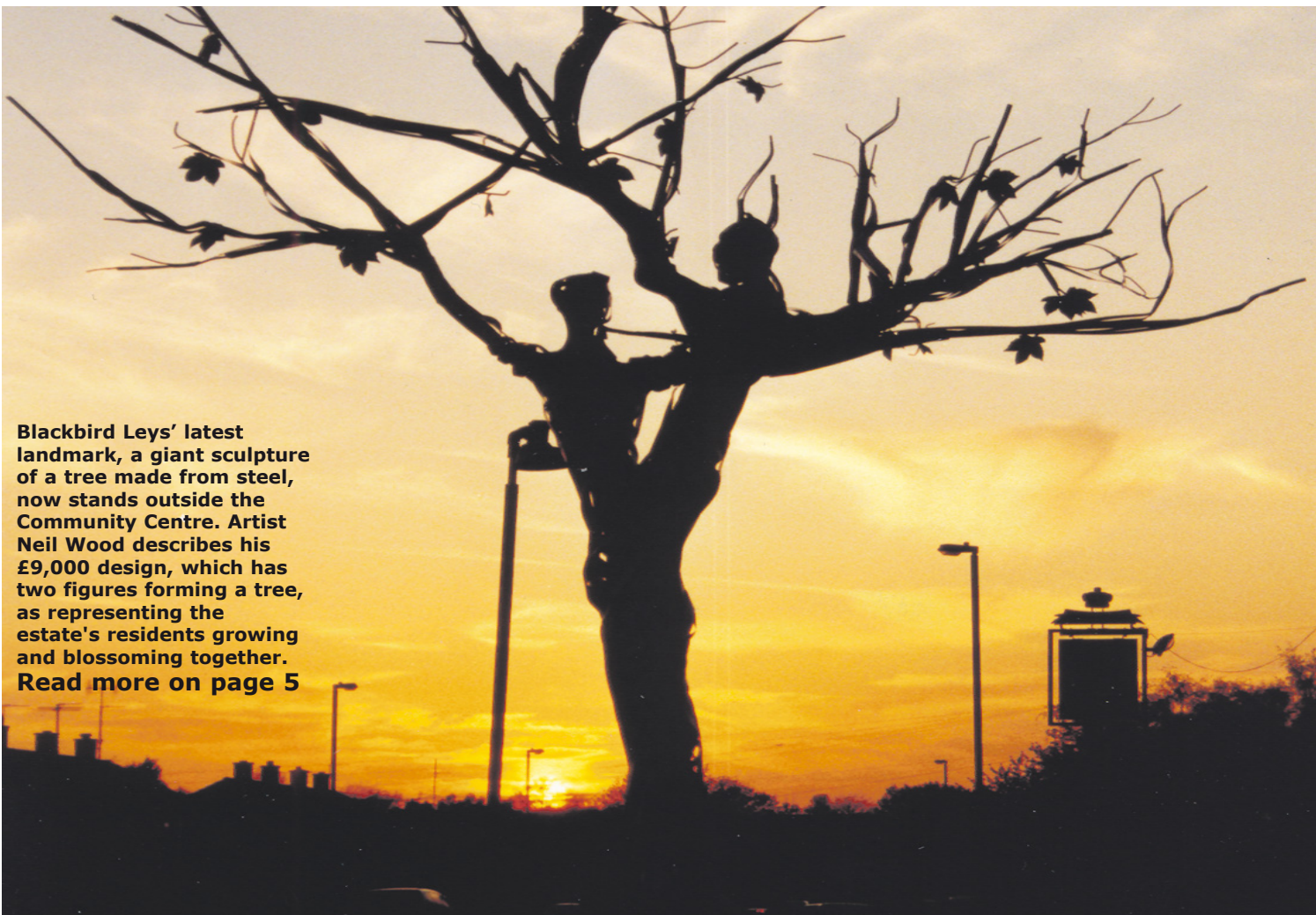


Glow Tree Revealed



Blackbird Leys' latest landmark, a giant sculpture of a tree made from steel, now stands outside the Community Centre. Artist Neil Wood describes his £9,000 design, which has two figures forming a tree, as representing the estate's residents growing and blossoming together. Read more on page 5

Issue 49 - June 2006

10th Year Anniversary Issue

Leys News is celebrating its 10th anniversary and over the last ten years the paper has changed enormously, going from a simple A4 newsletter to a full-colour bi-monthly. A few of Leys News' editors share their views on the paper. See page 22

The Leys does it locally!

Leys News has always been a big supporter of local activities and events. We think there are plenty of great things going on in and around the Leys. In the spirit of supporting local enterprise Leys News is now pleased to launch the new business section of the newspaper and "The Leys does it locally" campaign. See page 20



Kenya Story Part Two

Leys News editor, Becky Telford, returns from her three month sabbatical with her account of life in Nairobi, Kenya. Kenya is a country of extremes; incredible beauty in the national parks which have made it so famous, and incredible poverty in many communities across the country.

Full story and photos page 6

Arts & Culture Focus.....page 5

Gardening.....page 13

Blitz News.....page 18

Business News.....page 20

Scouts.....page 27

Church News.....page 29

What's on Weekly.....page 31



Right: from left to right: PCSOs Simone O'Dell, Jacqui Harris, Marie-Clare Tutty and Laura Jones with their new bikes.

Left: the PCSOs pose with the Parish Councillors.

Cycle Force!

On Monday 22nd May, outside the Blackbird Leys Community Centre, the Blackbird Leys Parish Councillors presented four Police Constable Support Officers with new bicycles paid for by the Parish Council. The four officers were given the bicycles to assist them in gaining fast access of the whole to the estate.



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Leys News 49

Leys News is a not-for-profit business dedicated to providing news and information to the whole community. We are not affiliated to any political party, and we operate an equal opportunities policy and encourage any resident to get involved in its work.

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Who's Who?

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Editor: Becky Telford.

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Distribution co-

ordinator: Gary Jones

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Leys News 50

**Out Early August
Copy & Advertising**

Deadline:

14th July 06

Leys News acknowledges financial assistance from: Oxford City Council, Catalyst Communities Housing Association, Oxford Citizens Housing Association, Cherwell Housing Trust, Awards for All, Blackbird Leys Community Chest, and the Community Champions Fund and support from: Newsquest (Oxfordshire) Ltd. and Business Boffins Ltd.

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Leys Personality

Richard Colbrook



RICHARD COLBROOK, PASTOR in charge of the Leys Community Church, has been a Leys resident for the last three years. He's married to Kate and they have three children. The LCC is a member of the Oxford Community Churches and was begun about three and a half years ago with Richard as the founding pastor. For many years the church met at the Leisure Centre on Pegasus Road, until recently when it began to meet afternoons at the Holy Family Church on Cuddesdon Way.

Richard is also a trustee and chair of the management committee of the Leys Youth Programme, a local charity that is now punching above its weight. It started off in 1999 as a small football club for a handful of young people in Greater Leys. It grew very

fast and soon had to be restructured into a charity. Before long, Richard's team was employing full time staff - Matt and Katie Gamble are their fantastic youth workers. One of his main duties as trustee is to lead fundraising to cope with the huge demand for clubs and mentoring (last year, their turnover was about £55,000). The programme now runs four football clubs, a Sunday league football team, three dance clubs and a cheerleading club. On Saturday mornings there is also a Kidz Klub for 5-to-11 year olds in addition to youth clubs, mentoring groups and one-on-one mentoring and advice.

With Matt and Katie leading a team of 16 local volunteers, last year Richard's LYP worked with over 300 children and young people from 5-to-25 years old. They have a vision that the future for the young people of the Leys can be one full of hope.

Richard's typical day is a busy one. When he is not involved in pastoral work, he is volunteering on the youth programme as line manager to Matt and Katie, fund-raising or volunteering with Kidz Klub.

His latest passion is his involvement in a team that is developing a strategic plan for the next five years for

working with girls and young women. "LYP Futures" is a £170,000 project combining clubs such as dance with mentoring, leadership training and empowering young women to take an active role in community activities.

Richard, who has lived in Oxford since 1987, believes that "At moments of crisis in the lives of people, they do things like pray". He does not believe in being 'religious', rather his vision is to "Help people find a friendship with God that will help them in their everyday life".

His constituency is not limited to children - Richard and his wife, Kate, also run a free Pensioners' Club on Wednesday afternoons between 2 and 4 pm at the Holy Family Church hall. He believes that the 'community' in the name of his church implies a mission to be an active part of, and benefit, the Leys community.

Richard supports Oxford United and England. He is still grieving on the relegation of the Yellow Shirts. Asked if he would use his connections Upstairs to bring them up next season, he laughs, opting to keep the residents of Kassam Stadium guessing.

Editorial

WELCOME TO ISSUE 49 of Leys News - a bumper 32-page full colour edition to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Leys News! There's so much inside:

reflections of the last ten years by Editors and volunteers who have been involved with the paper; pieces looking forward to the future of facilities and groups on the estate; loads of special competitions; and a whole bunch of ideas about how you can get involved with your community paper! There's also my reflections on my sabbatical working with urban communities in Nairobi, Kenya, and how this has made me think about life here on the Leys.

This is my last edition as the Editor of Leys News, as I am leaving Oxford to take up a new position in London. I will really miss the vibrancy of the estate, the wonderful people who take time to get to know, and take care of, their neighbours, and all the opportunities that life here presents. I want to say a huge thank you to all the people who have supported me in my role as Editor - particularly Julian Dourado, Tanya Prescott, Jim Barlow, Sasha East and Roy Simmonds. Thanks also go, of course, to the Board and all the local residents who have taken part during my time here. I hope to make it back to the Leys soon!

So put your feet up, relax, and enjoy this incredibly full and exciting edition of the paper - and get ready for the arrival of the new Editor who will be in post in time for the August edition.

Becky Telford

Like To Earn
Some Extra Cash?

Leys News is looking for community journalists to gather stories and take photos for the paper. We'll pay £15 per item published and an extra £5 if you can supply us with a picture. Enthusiasm and an eye for a story are more important than experience.

Just give us a ring on 711756 if you'd like to get involved.

Help Needed

Leys News is looking for distributors on a variety of paper rounds.

If you'd like to join our team for a few hours once every two months call us on Oxford 711756

Want to Advertise in Leys News?

We have special rates for community and not-for-profit organisations

Call Phil on 01865711756

LEYS NEWS

design services



We now offer a range of design services aimed at delivering to local businesses and community groups an affordable solution to all their marketing and design needs. From simple logos and stationery through to full colour page layouts for brochures. Our group of local designers offer a friendly and attentive approach.

Interested?

Call Phil on Oxford 711756

or visit www.leysnewsdesign.co.uk

Welcome to Blackbird Leys



A RESIDENT OF the estate asked the Parish Council if a sign could be made and erected on one of the roads leading into the estate.

Every day they pass a sign welcoming people to Summer-town and so therefore the idea was born. The Parish Council thought it was a good idea and so asked for a sign to be made.

We approached Oxford City Works and they came up with two designs. The Parish Council approved the one that is now erected.

We are hoping that this positive 'Welcome' signing will continue and that more signs will be sited throughout the estate on entrance roads in the future.

We would like residents to give us feed-back on their thoughts/ideas for future signage. We have been told that there are more elaborate signs available - who knows?

Brian Lester

Windale School Presentation Afternoon



ON FRIDAY 27TH April the whole of Windale School attended assembly for there weekly hand out of certificates of merit for the best worker and best behaved child in each class. The children were picked for these by their respective teachers. These were handed out by Mr Jones (assistant head) as their names were called out by their teachers. There were quite a lot of presentations which must be good for the children.

There were also special awards of Bronze, Silver, Gold and Diamond merits for the children who were deemed to have done exceptionally well that week.

Chillies Indian Takeaway



*New Indian & Bangladeshi
takeaway opening soon in
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- LL Study skills, GCSE and Revision support
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- LL Conferences on work related study for pupils and young adults
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For more information contact Jan Trefusis on 01865 487655, j.trefusis@aimhighermkob.co.uk, or visit our website at www.aimhighermkob.ac.uk/mkob.



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We care at the Square

We're changing...

At Catalyst Housing Group we're no stranger to changing neighbourhoods. Now we're changing ourselves. Our largest group member, Ealing Family Housing Association, is now known as *Catalyst Communities Housing Association*.

Catalyst Communities will manage Ealing Family's rented homes and Keystart Housing Association's leasehold properties across London and the South East.

Keystart Housing Association, has now become Catalyst Housing Group's Sales and Marketing Department, dealing with shared ownership sales across the Group.

For more information visit:

www.chg.org.uk/changing



Catalyst
Communities

Catalyst Communities HA is a charitable housing association.

New Landmark for the Leys



ON THURSDAY 26th April, at the the Blackbird Leys Community Centre, Mr Bob Price, Lord Mayor of Oxford, unveiled the Glow Tree - a giant sculpture made from steel and bronze. The five metre high sculpture was made by artist Neil Wood with help from local volunteers. Neil describes his £9,000 design, which has two figures forming a tree, as representing the estate's residents growing and blossoming together.

The concept of the tree was developed by GLOW - a community learning project held on the Leys Between May and August last year, which also ran a series of workshops in creative writing, art, poetry and singing. The dual figure design has been variously described as representing the Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys estates, or

reflecting Windrush and Evenlode tower blocks, and it is hoped that it will encourage tourists to stray from the city centre and visit the estate.

In the Jack Argent Room, at the same time as the event, was an exhibition of relief sculptures, these were made by both adults and children residing on the estate.

Also attending the unveiling of the Glow Tree was Ivor's Choir who sang 'O Sola Mio'. Leys News's roving reporter Roy Simmonds who attended the event said of the singers that for the short time they have been together they performed like seasoned veterans.

The construction of the Glow tree was funded by the National Lottery, the Millennium Commission and the Arts Council.

Cowley Road Carnival Presents "Eat the World" 2nd July, 2006

Lead Sponsor Announced

EAST OXFORD ACTION, organisers of the 'Cowley Road Carnival' are delighted to announce that this year's principal partner will be major local employer, BMW Group Plant Oxford.

The event will be held on the Cowley Road on Sunday 2 July from 12:00 noon until 6:00 pm. On the day there will be a range of food, music, arts, theatre and other family entertainment and hopes to attract tens of thousands of visitors from across the city and surrounding Oxfordshire.

In the run up to the event there will be a huge range of activities being undertaken by community groups, businesses, individuals and schools to prepare for the day. Plant Oxford's support will play a significant part in strengthening these community activities in East Oxford and more widely across the county.

Alexandra Brooks, Corporate Communications Manager of BMW Group Plant Oxford said: "As a



major local employer, BMW Group Plant Oxford is delighted to be able to strengthen the support for an event which is helping to bring the local community together through the celebration of diversity and social inclusion in the area."

Reading - Not just a place between Swindon and Slough...

This summer Oxford Playhouse are joining forces with Oxfordshire's Libraries to present **Box Office to Bookshelves**, an Arts Council England initiative designed to encourage children to read and write.

The project joins the vast resources of Libraries with the creative flair of theatres and aims to introduce reading and writing as fun creative pastimes for 8 - 12 year olds. **Box Office to Bookshelves** hopes to encourage children of this age to read and write more and to make reading an enticing option.

Box Office to Bookshelves in Oxfordshire has become active by the creation of a specially designed reading 'pod' in the style of a surf shack which will travel around the county visiting libraries, complete with beanbags and books to choose from. The surf shack will be available for children to use as they wish and also for special

sessions led by performance poets Marcus Moore and Sarah Jane Arbury; Catch a Wave will be a drop in session where children can learn to write limericks, haikus and sonnets, listen to a poem or just browse. Wordsurf will be a two-hour workshop where participants learn to write creatively and perform to parents and guardians from the surf shack at the end.

Recently the surf shack has been located at Oxford Playhouse but it will soon be coming to a library near you with visits to Cowley, Littlemore Peers and Blackbird Leys libraries amongst many others. Rupert Rowbotham, Head of Education at Oxford Playhouse comments; **Box Office to Bookshelves** is a great project for the county's children and we're really pleased to be involved. The ability to enjoy reading not only benefits children educationally but also builds confidence and enables them to express themselves, which in turn helps

them feel happier. The surf shack looks fantastic so make sure you come and check it out!

Come visit the Surf Shack...

5 June - 26 June
Kidlington Library, 01865 373067

26 June - 17 July
Witney Library, 01993 703659

17 July - 7 August
Oxford Playhouse, 01865 305305

7 August - 21 August
Littlemore Peers Library, 01865

714309

21 August - 4 September
Blackbird Leys Library, 01865 770403

Please contact the venue to book a place.

Competition

Win with BMW Group Plant Oxford!

Every issue you have a chance to win special prizes with BMW Group Plant Oxford. As well as sponsoring this page, they are holding a draw for readers to win goodie bags. To enter, tell us which local choir sang at the unveiling of the Glow Tree.

Send your answer, name and address to Leys News, 26 Kingfisher Green, or ring us on 01865 711756

Leys News Photo Special

Kenya Story Part Two

By Becky Telford

AS MANY OF you know from the last issue, I have taken a three month sabbatical to work in Nairobi, Kenya. Kenya is one of the largest countries in East Africa, bordering Tanzania, Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia, with an Eastern seacoast. It is a country of extremes; incredible beauty in the national parks which have made it so famous, and incredible poverty in many communities across the country.

I am living in Nairobi, Kenya's capital, which is a vibrant and bustling city, commonly considered the gateway to East Africa. It is also a very full city, with a population of more than 2.5 million people, and a share of the region's wealthy classes. However, the majority of the poor population continue to live in terrible conditions. The issues people living in these places have to deal with can be difficult for people living in the relative prosperity of the UK to understand. Some of the challenges are so basic that we wouldn't even think about them. Over half the city's population live in the informal or illegal settlements that were squeezed into just one-twentieth of Nairobi's total area - slums which are massively overcrowded. These settlements also tend to lack necessary infrastructure, such as access to water and sanitation, which has obvious implications for health. Because the slums are informal settlements which are not recognised by the government, residents face a constant risk of eviction and harassment. I have been working with people living in these slums in Nairobi. One of these is Kibera - reputedly Africa's largest slum - which has a population of more than 600,000 people and therefore challenges on a scale unheard of in the UK.

I have been working for a small organisation called Pamoja Trust, who work with a Federation of slum dwellers called Muungano wa Wanavijiji, supporting communities to help them develop their own solutions to the challenges they face. One of the initial stages is to map, or enumerate, the settlement. Despite the huge size of the slums, many of them do not exist on any official maps, and there is no clear information about the number of people or the situation they are living in. By mapping their area, people then have the information they need to identify which issues they want to focus on first, and are then able to use this information to negotiate for resources and support from other agencies such as the local Councils.

Developing Community Tools

As well as mapping their settlements, Muungano and Pamoja have been bringing people together through a network of community groups organised around daily savings schemes. These schemes involve families living in informal settlements coming together to save a small amount of money each day, which then provides a pot of money from which they can get small loans. As well as providing this access to credit which is usually denied to poor families, coming together financially helps to build trust and an ability to manage scarce resources efficiently, which puts them in a position to negotiate with municipalities and other



Communities coming together in Kibera, Africa's biggest slum (and the location for the film The Constant Gardener), which has more than 700,000 residents and almost no amenities

actors. Muungano now has 137 savings schemes, in 9 cities/towns with a total of more than 25,000 members, with savings standing at US\$400,000 (around £220,000). An Urban Poor Fund, Akiba Mashinani, was launched in November 2003, in order to provide larger capital funds to support the scaling up of community projects like housing development or putting in basic services.

Communities also come together to look at creating their own solutions to the problems of urban poverty. A key tool in this is a brainstorming exercise, where savings group members are encouraged to 'dream' about what their ideal house would be. Resulting ideas vary significantly from area to area, with some communities prioritising retail space within the house, and others designing smaller houses so that more can be fitted in the space available and relocation avoided.

Architectural and technical assistance is then provided by the Pamoja Trust, and sometimes by local professionals, with the result being a life-sized model in cloth and wood. This life-sized model enables people to 'feel' the space, particularly important for semi-literate people who may not be able to imagine abstract sizes. There have also been small precedent setting house building projects, where communities build their own houses - currently more than 50 houses have been built.

In Kenya, such models provide a highly visible means of demonstrating the skills and needs of a community. As a result, local government has now begun to take the needs of the slums much more seriously, and some of Nairobi's communities have been granted land and permission to redevelop. Community savings have picked up in anticipation, making it possible for model houses to be

replaced by real ones and for the whole process to move forward, with communities making their own plans and leading their own development.

Korogocho

With 18,000 households (70,000 people) Korogocho is the second biggest slum in Kenya. It was mapped by the community with great difficulty in 2000, and the survey results are being used in a court battle between structure owners and tenants. They are also being used to plan the site - despite the large numbers of people living on the land there is also a lot of dead space due to poor planning, which can be used. They are going to build some two-storey properties for a smaller footprint, but they are working with everyone involved to draw up plans and ensure the whole settlement is upgraded. This will include putting in the necessary infrastructure and formalising schools and health centres to try and break the cycle of poverty.

I have been working with a group of young people in Korogocho who are running a community newspaper, the Korogocho Mirror, which is much like Leys News. It is open to all members of the community who have something to say, and they have also worked hard to find local interest in the stories which are having an impact nationally, such as corruption. Korogocho used to have dramatic rates of sexual violence against women, to the point where any girl growing up there would almost definitely be raped at some point in their lives.

By coming together, undertaking youth projects to support the rights of girls to live in safety, opening up a dialogue across the community and developing systems such as the Korogocho Mirror where people can share information, the problem has

been drastically reduced.

As well as social problems, people living here face disadvantage through simple things like lack of a secure home, or access to water and sanitation. Charles Muindi lives with his wife, Rose and their son, James in a one-room shack in Korogocho. He grew up here and finished school - he now runs a small shop with his brother selling charcoal and keeping chickens. He got involved as part of the local enumerations team via the savings scheme in 2001 (many young people get involved through the enumerations, where people listen to their opinions) and has been heavily involved with a range of community activities since December 2002. He told me; "There are a lot of problems living here. You can't have enough room where you can have privacy - there's lack of space. Rooms are very small, we are congested. There are other problems, no jobs, no anything; we have to depend on our own ways of making money and surviving here. Our goal is that this country's government should think about everybody, especially persons who are living in this slum, or this shack. They are the people who are suffering most. They lack toilets, they lack proper bathrooms, they lack proper houses. They're living like goats. And this is not how we human beings are supposed to live."

By coming together and supporting one another, communities are starting to make a real difference to the way they live.

You can find out more, or make a donation to support these projects at www.homeless-international.org



Children looking out of a new community toilet block, Githaturu, Nairobi



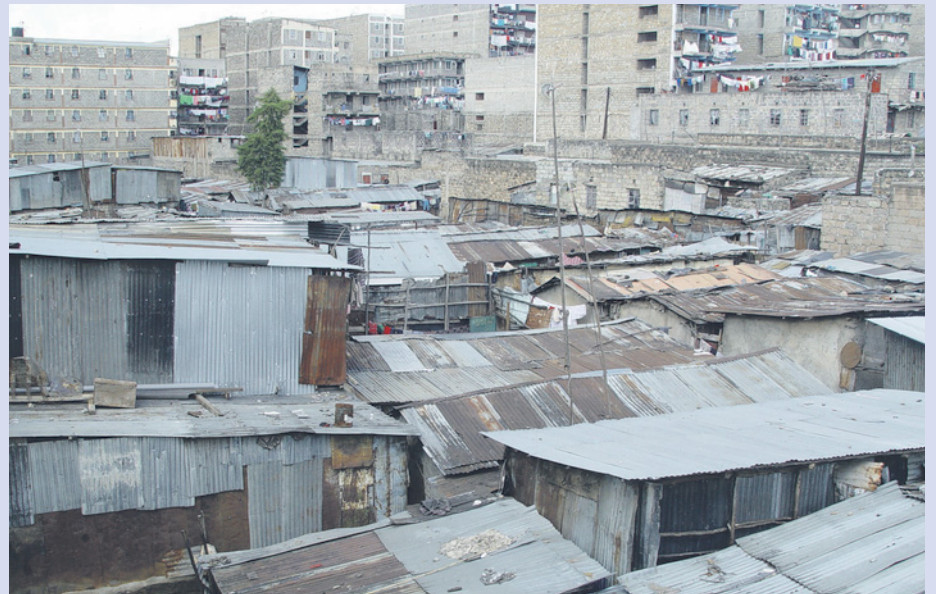
The other side of Kenya - an elephant family in the world famous Amboseli National Park



Charles Muindi and his family at his charcoal stall in Korogocho



Becky with Joseph Muturi, one of the Federation leaders making a difference in Toi Market, Nairobi



A view of the shacks that families live in, Githaturu, Nairobi



A zebra family, Tsavo West National Park

Blackbird Leys Litter Campaign

By Bob Avery



MONDAY 24th April saw the launch of our latest campaign to keep Blackbird Leys Litter Free. We managed to get two of our local schools involved in this project.

Windale and Pegasus were the first to participate. With the co-operation of the Headteachers and assistants, six children were chosen from each school.

The day started with them all having their photographs taken, by the Oxford Mail, and our very own Roy Simmonds from the Leys

News who very kindly gave up his morning to do the honours!

The campaign was then officially launched, with the children involved being presented with a special 'Keep Blackbird Leys Litter Free' campaign badge (already a sought-after collectors item)!

Everyone was issued with protective gloves, a litter-picker and a supply of refuse sacks. All the children got stuck into the task of removing litter from the perimeter of their

individual schools with much zeal. The morning was a success. It was a joy to see the children so genuinely involved in what will hopefully be an ongoing project.

We believe this project is the first of its kind in the City of Oxford, and are proud that the children on the estate have pioneered such an important issue.

Each School was presented with a Certificate of Participation from the Parish Council, and each Litter Monitor will also be presented with their own personal Certificate of Merit from the Parish Council. All Monitors can then designate a friend who they think has an interest in this project and so it will grow and grow. Well done Children!

Lastly, and most importantly, this project could not have taken place without the assistance of City Works, who not only supplied all the tools, but also sent along four Cleansing Technicians who gave expert supervision to the children and worked extremely hard, clearing up litter. A big thankyou lads.

Let us all take a moment and think just what message the children on our estate are sending. They are setting an example and a standard - don't let them down, PICK UP YOUR LITTER!



Above: the team from Pegasus School

Left: the Windale School team

News in Brief

Why not join Neighbourhood Watch?

Neighbourhood Watch is a free service available to help reduce crime in your area by promoting community spirit and offering links with the police.

We have more than 550 Neighbourhood Watch contacts across the city. Some display signs and stickers, others work without anyone else knowing. All are vital for the exchange of information with the Police.

If you would like to know more about Neighbourhood Watch then please contact Jo or Steve on 01865 335133 or email ringmaster.oxford@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Oxford Blackbird Boys Fundraising Day

Saturday 28th August saw many of the Blackbird Leys football managers play against the boys' mums and dads, with the boys cheering their parents on.

The day had been arranged to try and raise enough funds to buy equipment for the forthcoming season.

When this season ends, a list of all the boys' teams and their positions in the league will be produced.

Well Being

Local charity The Speedwell & WellBeing Trust have organised a health talk on Wednesday 19th July at Green College, Oxford entitled HYPOGLYCAEMIA - THE GRAND DECEIVER! by Roderick Lane starting at 7.30pm. Hypoglycaemia is part of the symptom pattern of many life-debilitating disorders including migraine, depression, chronic fatigue, diabetes, PMT, hyperactivity and attention disorders, yet it is routinely dismissed. This talk will provide insight into how to identify and manage the condition, as well as focusing on the dietary and nutritional needs of sufferers.

Admission is £4 at the door or £2 in advance - contact the Trust's Helpline on 0x 554089 or visit www.speedwellbeing.org.uk for further information.

Soapbox

Appreciating what we've got

By Becky Telford

READING THROUGH THE past Editors' pieces, I was struck by how much the estate has changed since the bad old days of joy riding when we made the national news. Part of this has to be down to the number of amazing projects which are happening on the estate and all the opportunities we have as residents here: Leys Linx, Blitz, Leys News, CDI, sports, health and education facilities, and so much more.

In many ways there is a positive vibe to the Leys – it's the only place I've lived in Oxford where people actually greet each other on the street – so why aren't we all a bit more grateful for what we have?

One example of this is people's unwillingness to get involved and really say what they think. There are so many opportunities to have a go and influence what it is going on around the Leys, why aren't we speaking up?

There's a real lack of resident involvement on Boards of community organisations, and whilst the people who make up these Boards usually do a great job, there are always the usual suspects and there needs to be much more local representation. Perhaps the idea of sitting on a Board doesn't appeal to you, but have a chat with the organisation and

they can always work out a way for you to contribute in a way that you find interesting and benefits both of you. People always stop me on the street to say what they think should be in Leys News, but why not go the extra mile and actually write it yourself? Almost all the organisations on the estate have support and training available to help people get involved.

When I was working in communities in Nairobi, the problems there made the Leys look like paradise. I'm not saying that life here is perfect for us all, but we have opportunities and freedoms that are unheard of over there.

And yet more people there grasp every opportunity they are offered and make it work, for the sake of their family and neighbours.

The community newspaper I worked on, the Korogocho Mirror, was put together entirely by volunteers. One of the stories they wrote investigated corruption within the local government who had 'sidetracked' funds meant for slum upgrading.

As a result of the story, they suffered death threats, and the Editor had his house firebombed. But they carried on writing and fighting for what was theirs. If they can stand up and be counted in that environment, why can't we?

The opinions expressed in this column are those of the author, and not necessarily those of *Leys News*.

Send reactions - and articles - to
leysnews@hotmail.co.uk

or write to *Leys News*, 26 Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys, Oxford, OX4 7BX.

Oxfordshire Mind

By Nicky Clargo

It's a fact - exercise is good for the body and mind!

IT'S A FACT, training for any kind of exercise is good for your own mental health. A recent Mind / Cannons survey of over 1000 Cannons members shows that exercise can lift your spirits and boost your energy as well as being great for your body!

59% of gym members said exercise has benefited their mental health. 75% of people said that exercise has improved their self-image. 32% said it improved their work performance, AND... 30% claimed a better sex life!

With these statistics in mind (excuse the pun), there is NO better reason than to become involved in this years Oxfordshire Mind Sponsored Walks!

There are two dates to choose from:

Across Port Meadow, Oxford - 6 Miles

A Circular Walk from The Trout at Wolvercote. Sunday, 20th August 2006. Start: 11.00 a.m. - Outside The Trout Pub, Wolvercote, Oxford. Within seconds of leaving Oxford's

famous riverside pub, The Trout at Wolvercote, the scenery will be rural.

You will find yourself walking a quite stretch of the Oxford Canal towpath and we will stop at the end of the Canal (opposite Antiquity Hall Pub, Hythe Bridge Street) to relax for a short while to enjoy refreshments (please remember your picnic!). From then on we walk along the River Thames and back to The Trout for more refreshments if you wish!

Abingdon Abbey 8 Miles

A Circular Walk from Abingdon via Culham, Sutton Courtenay and Drayton, Sunday, 16th September 2006. Start: 11.00 a.m. - Bridge Street Car Park, Abingdon (A415)

This walk passes through Culham, Sutton Courtenay, Drayton and back to Abingdon. The route follows three waterways (the Thames, the Ock and Ginge Brook). On the edge of the village green next to the Church, the George and Dragon has a fine location in the heart of Sutton Courtenay

village. Here we will stop for a drink and a short break. Please bring a picnic for lunch later.

Funds raised from these Sponsored Walks will help provide vital services for people who are experiencing mental and emotional health problems such as anxiety, bereavement, depression, life crisis, loneliness, recovery from breakdowns, panic attacks, stress and schizophrenia.

For a sponsorship form or to make a donation please contact:

*Nicky Clargo, Oxfordshire Mind, 125 Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6AH
Tel: (01865) 310830 or Email:*

*nicky.clargo@oxfordshire-mind.org.uk
www.oxfordshire-mind.org.uk/events
Please make donations payable to 'Oxfordshire Mind'.*

Oxfordshire Mind Events Coming Up

Ascott Music Festival in aid of Oxfordshire Mind

Friday, 21st and Saturday, 22nd July 2006, Crown Farm, Ascott Under Wychwood, Nr Witney, Oxon. Local professional and semi professional bands and artists will feature, along with international bands such as Richard Thompson, Paul Jones and the Blues Band, Nine Below Zero, Rachael Warwick. Local bands and artists include: Pseudo7, Reservoir Cats, The Other Beatles, Every Hippies Dream, Jumping The Gun, FOG, plus others to be announced. For info visit www.amf.uk.net to sponsor the event visit www.justgiving.com/ascottmusicfestival

Trek Sierra Nevada and Explore Granada in aid of Oxfordshire Mind

19th - 23rd April 2007. Registration Fee £50, Sponsorship £1,200! Email: nicky.clargo@oxfordshire-mind.org.uk for more info or to sponsor me visit www.justgiving.com/clargo

Tractor mad Terry Pope is planning a tractor marathon from John O'Groats to Lands End on 15th June. He will stop off at Hullavington, Wilts for "The Great Tractor Challenge" on 25th June to take part in an attempt to secure the world record for the greatest number of tractors ploughing simultaneously in one field! To sponsor Terry visit www.justgiving.com/terrypope

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New nursery opens in the Leys

A new nursery has opened in Blackbird Leys, Oxford, as part of a complete refurbishment of the Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre.

THE IMAGINE CO-OPERATIVE Childcare nursery is a new addition to the family centre at 61-3 Cuddesdon Way.

The family centre will be part of the new Leys Children's Centre which is in the process of being formed bringing together health, childcare, family and early education services in the area.

'Cuddesdon Corner' has undergone a complete refit costing £360,000, funded by Oxfordshire County Council and the Department for Education and Skills. The project is a partnership of public, private and voluntary sectors, including the council, The Midcounties Co-operative - which runs imagine... nurseries - and local voluntary groups.

Downstairs has been converted to include the imagine... nursery area, a kitchen and toilets. Upstairs there are multi-purpose rooms and a new training room which will be used to run courses for local residents and practitioners. Childcare will be available for parents attending the courses.

An expanded outdoor area will mean that different groups can use the space at different times and whole centre activities can include everyone. Family centre organisers will be involving local families in the design and creation of the garden in coming months.

An open day was held on Thursday 6 April where local families could look around the nursery and the family centre. The County Council's Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, Cllr Louise Chapman, joined parents and children for a cake cutting ceremony.

She said: "The new nursery means that parents will have more choice when it comes to flexible and high quality childcare.

"They will also benefit from the wider range of services that the family centre will be able to provide as part of the Leys Children's Centre. 'Cuddesdon Corner' will offer family support, childcare and training and will be an information point about other existing and new services which are joining together in the coming months to form the Leys Children's Centre."

Jenny Martin, acting manager of the family centre, said:

"Part of the County Council's ethos is to join up services for local families and we were delighted to work with Imagine Co-operative Childcare because they are an established, reputable childcare provider."

Jane Long, neighbourhood nursery manager at Imagine Co-operative Childcare, said:

"We were delighted and flattered to be approached about setting up a satellite nursery in the new family centre. Having spent many years getting to know local families we feel very much part of the community here. We are pleased to be providing affordable childcare to help parents whether they are working or studying. With brand new purpose-built facilities it's an attractive nursery area that is warm and welcoming."

The new Imagine Co-operative Childcare nursery will have 20 places for children aged two to five years, providing 'wrap around' childcare including out-of-school-hours care and a breakfast club. The existing imagine... nursery in Cuddesdon Way offers



54 places and has been run for 12 years, the last two as part of Imagine Co-operative Childcare.

Reservations for places have started already and enquiries can be made by calling Jane Long on 01865 550837.

The nursery and the family centre officially opened for business on Monday 10 April.



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UKdads & the Potential Project

Father's Day at The Barn

This year, Father's Day should sparkle with the special event being laid on by the Potential Project for Leys families. On 17th June, all roads will lead to The Barn on Nightingale Avenue where the music starts at noon and doesn't end till 5pm. There will be a barbecue and lots of free food as well as a bouncy castle, face painting, ball pool and other children's games. Special advisers will be on hand for interested dads. All welcome!

The Harder They Come

On 22nd April, 2006, the 70s cult classic film, *The Harder They Come*, was reprised on the stage by a fantastic performance at London's Theatre Royal. The Potential Project treated several Blackbird Leys resident to a great night out.

It was a night of nostalgic songs combined with superlative performances from the cast. At the end of the evening, many in the audience showed their appreciation in unconventional fashion by dancing to old favorites that included 'You can get it if you really want'

Kingfisher Green

Do you live in the neighbourhood of that dilapidated playground on Kingfisher Green in Greater Leys? Do you have any ideas about redeveloping or improving it? The Potential Project will like to hear from you; call Carlton with your suggestions for new play equipment.

Mens Health MOT Day



UKdads - The Potential Project and The Oxford City Primary Care Trust on Saturday 28th April, held a Men's Health MOT day. This included the Taking of Blood Pressure, Talks by the nurses of how important it is to eat healthily - at least five pieces of fruit and veg a day. They laid on dishes of and fruit (which could be taken away) to show how this can be achieved. They also encouraged people to give blood at one of the blood banks around the city. Many men walked in from the street which helped to make the day a success.



Above: Some of the MOT Team:

Left: Leys News' Roy Simmonds gets some free information

Right: It wasn't all about men at the MOT Day... Darren James looks on as Jaqui helps his son to some of his 5-a-day!



Can You Make a Difference? Outreach Workers Wanted

Sessional workers are required to join Potential Project's Community Development team in the Blackbird Leys area. Training will be provided, so this is an opportunity to learn new communications skills that will be useful when dealing with the public and work colleagues.

- Free training for volunteers,
- Meet and network with local dads and carers,
- See how working as a volunteer can enhance your personal and professional development, &
- Increase your cultural awareness.

Training Day: June 13th, 2006 at 11.30 - 3 pm.
Venue: 26 Kingfisher Green, Greater Leys, Oxford.

For more information, call 01865 779298, 07795 665597 or email: ukdadsposse@yahoo.co.uk

UKdads & The Potential Project

26 Kingfishers Green, Greater Leys, Oxford OX4 7BX. Tel: 779298

Email: ukdadsposse@yahoo.co.uk

Website: www.ukdadsposse.co.uk

Supported by the European Social Fund, Oxfordshire County Council, and Learning and Skills Council.

Heathly Living Inititive

You know what they say: Get your 5-a-day!

But what does it mean?

Everybody is advised to try and eat a combination of at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables everyday. Its really important to try to eat a variety of different ones to get a good mix of nutrients.

Why do we need to eat them?

Most fruit and vegetables contain some of the substances that we need to keep healthy such as fibre, vitamins and minerals and antioxidants. They are generally low fat and low calorie foods, and by having these as snacks instead of foods high in fat or added sugars, you can help to keep your weight within a healthy range. Eating more fruit and vegetables may also help to reduce the risk of developing heart disease and some cancers.

What counts?

- 1) Fresh, frozen, canned (in juice), 100% juice and dried fruit and vegetables can count.
- 2) A portion of fruit would be, for example, 1 banana, 2 satsumas, or 3 dried apricots.
- 3) A medium-sized glass of 100% juice or smoothie can count just once per day.
- 4) A portion of vegetables would be for example 1 cereal bowl of salad or 3 heaped tablespoons of cooked vegetables such as sweetcorn, carrots or peas.

5) We should try to eat a combination of fruit and vegetables from different sources as part of our 5-a-day. DO not only eat dried or tinned fruits, try to get some variety!

How can I fit this in to my meals?

You could try adding fresh or dried fruit to cereal in the mornings for breakfast and have a glass of 100% juice. Add a salad to your jacket potato at lunchtime and plenty of vegetables with your evening meal. Snack on fruit or raw vegetable sticks like carrot and pepper if you get hungry during the day.

The information above was taken from the book 'Fuel for Living' published by the NHS. The Healthy Living Initiative has a stock of these pocket-sized booklets which have some fantastic recipes like 'Fajita Fiesta', 'The one-pot roast' and 'Perfect Pasta'.

Please call Kate Dunsdon on 01865 715577 if you would like a copy. You can also find out more information on the 5-a-day website: www.5aday.nhs.uk



Like To Earn Some Extra Cash?

Leys News is looking for community journalists to gather stories and take photos for the paper. We'll pay £15 per item published and an extra £5 if you can supply us with a picture. Enthusiasm and an eye for a story are more important than experience.

Just give us a ring on 711756 if you'd like to get involved.

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Green Fingers

By Stuart Mabbutt



Summer Garden Tasks

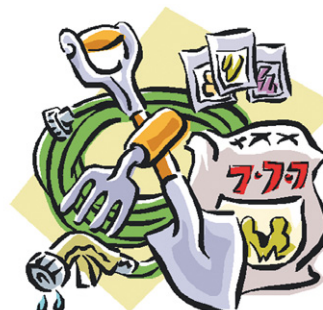
FOR THE FIRST time in a while, I decided to pen an article which runs through some gardening tasks that you could be doing over the next few weeks.

Hopefully, you will be inspired enough to run out there into your garden and find a whole range of other jobs to do.

Firstly, the earliest dwarf French beans will now be ready for picking. Gathering them whilst young and tender will avoid them becoming stringy. It's important to keep gathering them as they become ready, then the plants will keep on bearing more and more.

Shallots

Shallots will be ripening if they were planted early enough. The soil should be pulled a little bit away from the cloves a few days prior to picking, so the sun can get to them and aid ripening.



Endives

Sow moss-curved endive now to produce an autumn crop. Put the seeds into a seed tray with some good compost to grow them on, before transplanting them.

When they are ready for planting out, place them 12 inches apart with another 12 inches between rows. The moss-curved type is usually preferred to the Batavian for autumn and early winter usage.



Pruning

Summer pruning of wall fruit and other trained types can begin. Plums and sweet cherries are done first, and pears soon after. Morello cherries, peaches and nectarines are not summer pruned, except to thin some of the surplus young shoots which shade the fruit from the sun.

Water layered strawberry runners when they appear, and if silver-leaf disease shows on plums, peaches or cherries, it must be cut out. When cut, a brown stain may be seen in the wood; the branch must then be cut back a section at a time, until the stain has

disappeared. You then know you have removed the diseased area.

Rock Gardens

As the flowers of alpine plants die down on the rock garden, they should be cut off unless, like Dryas Octoetala, they happen to have interesting fruits.

Many of the ordinary alpine are better cut back fairly hard, flowers, stems, leaves and all. This prevents straggling, induces compact growth and encourages the throwing up of new shoots, which can be used for propagation. Varieties that can be treated in this way are arabis alba (both single and double flowered varieties) lithospermum prostratum "Heavenly Blue", some of the more robust mossy saxifrages, gypsophila repens, the evergreen candytuft, violas and many others of the spreading type.

Some stonecrops have a habit of spreading too readily, so it pays to weed them out drastically when they overrun their own particular pocket.

The trimming and control of rock plants growing in dry stone walls should also be undertaken as they cease to flower. Annuals grown on the rock garden should be thinned as they require it.



Lawns

Summer mowing should now be underway - twice a week cutting will be needed when the soil is moist. If there is a long dry spell, raise the height of the cut and do not use the grass box.

This time of year, summer weeding and feeding of lawns is commonplace. If the lawn is off-colour, use quick acting nitrogen feed such as Bio Lawn Tonic or sulphate of ammonia. Spot-treat weeds which have survived earlier treatment.

Raking before mowing is important for keeping runners of clovers under control, and don't forget to trim the edges of lawns regularly.

Well, there you have it. You must be able to find a task in that little lot you can do in your own garden, though you may well find another job as well whilst you're out there! Beware, it's never ending, but so rewarding, don't you think?

Happy gardening.

Stuart Mabbutt

Blackbird Leys Library

By Debbie Walker, Library Manager

Summer activities for children

All the events are free but tickets for the workshop are Limited and are available from the Library from the end of July.

The Reading Mission

Starting in July in time for the school holidays, children of all ages are invited to join our Summer reading scheme, the Reading Mission. Are you willing to become a special agent?

Do you enjoy breaking codes and working out puzzles?
Can you read 6 books through the summer holidays?
If the answer is yes why not check out the Library in July!
Look out for special storytimes as well!

Try your hand with a writer and a poet make friends with balloon heads, complete Word Wigs, make a pet or disorderly animal out of poetry and lots more.
On Monday 14th August 2.00-4.30pm

Catch a Wave workshop

Puzzles and games will inspire you to write riddles and rhymes and perform poetry to your friends. You will need to have a ticket for this event and it is for 8-12year olds on Saturday 19th August 9.30-12.00

We look forward to seeing you!

Library Opening times

Mon: 9.00-12.00, 1.30-5.00
Tues: 9.00-12.00
Wed: 9.00-12.00, 1.30-5.00
Thurs: 9.00-12.00, 1.30-5.00
Friday: Closed
Saturday: 9.30-12.30

Surf Shack

Come and see our Surf Shack arriving on the 9th August and staying with us until 28th August. If you are wondering what the Surf Shack is all about, it is a specially designed "reading space" giving young people a place to visit, read and write and have fun with words. Teaming up with the Oxford Playhouse, Blackbird Leys Library is able to offer 2 special sessions. (See page 5 for more information about Surf Shack)

WordSurf

A drop in session for all ages.

Tel 01865 770403

Positively Talented

CDI celebrated another success with the final performance from the Positive Lyrics project at the Zodiac club on 14th May.

THE PROJECT WAS developed after last summer's incidents of violent crime on the estate, and after previous young people's music projects had thrown up problems with the lyrical content of some tunes.

The project, which was run jointly with the Youth Service, worked with more than 50 young people at Blackbird Leys Youth & Community Centre and the Leys Music Recording Studio over five months. "We started off looking at issues around respect, and thinking about how you can communicate in a meaningful way", said Marsha Jackson who led the project. "We had

discussions about positive role models like Malcolm X, and talked about how you can express your feelings about your life in a way that people can relate to and respect."

The project then worked with the young people to write lyrics for tunes, work on the production element of music making, and make a film about the project. One of the key elements of the project was the great relationships built up between the young people and the youth workers. Popular local artists Zagu Zarr and Teddy Dan were on hand to share their experience in lyric writing and working in the

music business. "I'm so proud of the young people, they worked so hard", said Teddy. "With encouragement they can go far and keep up the conscious vibe. I'm proud of them wanting to do better things for themselves."

The project was supported by the Connected Fund, Learning Communities and Community Learning Support, but its success is due to the hard work and strength of the young people and workers involved: as one of the young people participating said, "None of this would have come true if it weren't for Marsha."

Brooklyn Says 'No'

LEYS NEWS HAS heard that it will not be possible at this time for the Parish Council to advance with their twinning request. This is because the Sister City Programme is the only arrangement that New York has with foreign cities at this time, and to date incorporates only city-to-city relationships.

The Executive Director for the Sister City Programme of New York is quoted in saying: "Although the establishment of a formal relationship between the borough of Brooklyn and Blackbird Leys is an intriguing concept, the Sister City Programme is unable to forge a new official partnership at this time. We hope to have other ways to work with foreign cities in the future and would be happy to re-evaluate this request. On behalf

of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, thank you for your correspondence expressing interest in the Sister City Programme of New York. Your interest is a compliment to the successful programme of Mayor Bloomberg."

Bob Avery, Vice Chairman of the BBL Parish Council, tells us that the Parish Council is not unduly disappointed with this statement because "it does leave the door open for us to explore this again sometime in the future. What really matters is that it was an idea that was worked upon for the good of the community, and things we have learned from the Brooklyn experience can only be of benefit to the community as a whole."

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- Freetime - afternoon sessions
- Mini movers
- Did-leys dance
- Football Academy
- Family Yoga
- Post Natal

Lots of fun at Blackbird Leys pool

- Free swimming for under 17's
- Swimming Lessons
- Birthday Parties
- Ladies only session
- Primetime session
- Water workout

Contact centres for information:

Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre 01865 467020
Blackbird Leys Pool 01865 467040
Peers Sports Centre 01865 467095
Temple Cowley Pools 01865 467124

Barton Pool 01865 467290
Oxford Ice Rink 01865 467002
Ferry Sports Centre 01865 467060
Hinksey Pool 01865 467079



Hints & Tips

Help Around The Home Part 2

Cleaning casserole dishes

Simply sprinkle some baking soda onto your dirty casserole dishes and let sit for five minutes. Then scrub lightly and rinse.

Keeping shower doors clean

For glass shower doors to be cleaned use lemon oil with a dust cloth and the water will beat off limescale for a month or so.

Lazy cleaners

You can get away with not cleaning those areas around the home which are higher than your tallest visitor - what people can't see won't hurt them.

Blocked drains

Clear the sink drain by dropping three Alka-Seltzer tablets down the drain followed by a cup of white vinegar - wait a few minutes, then run the hot water.

Toilets

To clean a toilet, drop in two Alka-Seltzer tablets, wait twenty minutes, brush and flush. The citric acid and effervescent action clean vitreous china.

Eggs

To discover whether an egg is fresh or not, immerse it in a pan of cold, salted water. If it sinks, use. If it floats, throw it away.

Tupperware

Spray your Tupperware with non-stick cooking spray before pouring in tomato-based sauces and there will not be any stains.

Ants

It is said that ants will never cross a chalk line. Draw a chalk line on the floor or sidewalk or wherever ants tend to march. Try powdered chalk for less permanence. Baby powder is said to work, also.

Cleaning microwave ovens

To remove dried on food from inside your microwave, boil some water in a bowl for a couple of minutes. The steam loosens the dried on food.

More ants

Ants dislike peppermint in any way, shape, or form. Grow peppermint in your yard, especially around the doorways. Dry some and sprinkle in cabinet corners.

Cockroaches

For cockroaches, use bay leaves in corners and any place that is dark, such as under sinks, under the fridge, or any place you suspect they are hiding. They die and will not return.

Dislike like the smell of mothballs?

Place cinnamon sticks in your wardrobe and clothes drawers. The smell of cinnamon, though pleasant to humans, repels clothes moths.

Disclaimer: The advice in this column was acquired by Leys News in good faith. Leys News cannot be held responsible for any harm, loss, damage caused by anyone acting upon these tips.



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Community Chest

Congratulataions to the fourteen organisations on the Leys who received a cheque from the Leys Community Chest

In the last two rounds 23 groups/ organisations applied for a grant between £250 and £500 towards much needed play equipment, training, workshops for local people, to subsidise trips for Leys pensioners and many other important projects.

Unfortunately there was not enough money to give to all the organisations that applied. We -the volunteers sitting on the chest- really would have liked to give money to all the exiting projects but after long discussions difficult decisions had to be made. Preference was given to small, grassroots community organisations of the Leys, which are run mainly by volunteers and/or promote and support local volunteering. We are sure that the chosen organisations have been making and will continue to make significant differences to the people's lives on the Leys.

- Congratulations to
- The Golden Circle Group
 - Barn Youth Project
 - Agnes Smith Advice Centre
 - Community Action Development Project (CAD)
 - Adult Network Game Night at BLITZ every Friday
 - The Blackbird Leys Art Group (BLAG)
 - The Church of the Holy Family
 - The Listening Centre
 - Leys over 60 CLUB
 - Dovecote Voluntary Parent Committee
 - Leys Youth Programme
 - Moorbank Pre-School
 - Show Time Dance Group
 - The Looking After Yourself Project

So, good luck with all your projects and don't forget the grants were made possible because of the hard work of all the volunteers of the Leys Community Chest in 2005/2006 and the £5000 gratefully received from the Oxfordshire Community Foundation.

Case Study - Moorbank Pre-School

The pre-school was threatened with the risk of closure at the end of 2004 because of falling numbers. Thanks to a grant from the Community Chest, the pre-school has been able to buy a range of new toys and equipment for children with learning disabilities.

Moorbank now has a full register and is looking forward to continuing to provide great services for children on the Leys.

Cash Boost To Local Charity

Blackbird Leys Neighbourhood Support Scheme Ltd is to receive a grant of £240.00 from the Leys Community Chest through Oxfordshire Community Foundation.

The grant will help make the main reception area of this valuable organisation more welcoming for staff, visitors and clients alike by improving the heating in what can be a very cold and uncomfortable area.

Wally Cox, Grants Manager for the Oxfordshire Community Foundation, said:

"We are delighted to contribute towards this valuable group. We try to focus our grants on small, grass-roots, community organisations which are making small but significant differences to people's lives"

Ms Fran Bennett from Blackbird Leys Neighbourhood Support Scheme Ltd, said:

"We are very grateful to the Oxfordshire Community Foundation for helping us the residents of Blackbird Leys"

Healthy New You? Healthy New Leisure Centre!



THE BLACKBIRD LEYS Leisure Centre reopened in April after a redevelopment programme which has been three years in the making. The £1.2 million refurbishment, which was co-funded by Sport England and Oxford City Council, has seen the Centre develop into a community hub with a range of state-of-the-art facilities and bright and accessible meeting spaces.

As well as a new community hall - which can open out onto the refurbished old hall - the gym has been developed into the Oxford City Council branded Aspire fitness suite. There has been a redecoration of key spaces, and a new range of classes is available (see timetable, opposite).

"I really want to use this exciting redevelopment as a way of getting the local community back involved in the life of the Centre," said Trevor Evans, the Centre Manager. "For the last few years, the number of residents using the facilities here has been in decline, but we're trying to make it more open and welcoming."

One of the ways this is being done is through focusing on leisure, rather than just on health and sports activities. The halls are used by a variety of community groups, including local churches. The idea of the new

hall is also to encourage new people and groups to use the Centre. There is an airy open space in the entrance lobby where people can meet up, which will also be the focal area for the café whose opening is planned later in the year. The café will be run in conjunction with the Healthy Living Initiative, providing access to healthy food and advice.

There are some more developments in the pipeline, including the use of a space in the Centre for a crèche. Lack of crèche facilities have been identified as an obstacle to residents' use of the Centre, and options are still under discussion with the City Council.

Free taster courses are going to be available during the summer, and there are new timetables available in the Centre. "We are really committed to putting the Centre back at the heart of the community," said Trevor. "We're half way between Blackbird and Greater Leys, and the facilities here are excellent." So come and find out about your new look Centre, and take advantage of this fantastic local amenity!

Leisure Centre Times

Aerobics

A cardiovascular workout involving high and low impact moves.

Thursdays 6.30 -7.30pm

Aerotone

A class consisting of half cardiovascular conditioning and half body toning.

Mondays 6.00 - 7.00pm

Core & Floor

Ideal for those who want to concentrate on core conditioning exercises. This class may use stability balls.

Wednesdays 8.00 - 8.45pm

Fridays 10.00 - 11.30am

Family Yoga

Simple yoga poses and easy stretches are mixed with stories, games and relaxation for the whole family.

Thursays 1.30 - 2.30pm

Fighting Fit

Tuesdays 12.30 - 1.15am

Wednesdays 7.00 - 7.55pm

Freestyle Fitness Yoga

A class that targets flexibility using Pilates and yoga type exercises to enhance core stability and strength. It is not a spiritual experience.

Tuesdays 7.00 -7.45pm

Groove FX

A seriously stylish selection of street, salsa, Latin and hip hop workouts that can be enjoyed by all.

Legs, Bums & Tums

A conditioning class which focuses on strengthening and toning the lower half of the body.

Wednesday 6.00-7.00pm

Thursdays 9.30 - 10.30am

Pilates

A class that targets the deep postural muscles of the body by building strength from the inside out, rebalancing the body and

bringing it into correct alignment.

Beginners - for those new to Pilates

Intermediate - For those who have attended the beginners' sessions or have been doing Pilates for a while

Beginners

Tuesdays 6.00 - 700pm

Wednesdays 12.30 - 1.30pm

Intermediate

Thursdays 11.30 -12.30pm

Postnatal Exercise

A great way for new mums to return to exercise after their six week check up. Exercises will work on the areas of the body put under strain during pregnancy e.g. abs, back, and pelvic floor. Babies are welcome.

Wednesdays 10.00 - 11.00am

Primetime (for 50+)

A fun exercise class carefully

designed for more mature participants to improve strength, balance and posture.

Fridays 9.30 - 10.30am

Primetime Yoga

A yoga class specially designed for more mature participants. Bring a blanket and a cushion, and wear comfortable and warm clothing.

Wednesdays 10.30-12noon

Tae Kwon Do

Martial arts for all - all standards are welcome.

Tuesdays 6.00 - 7.00pm

Thursdays 6.00pm - 7.00pm

Weight Management Circuits

A specially designed class for those new to exercise. Sessions begin with a weigh in, target setting and workout.

Mondays 9.30 - 11.00am

Saturdays 10.00 -11.00am

The Glow Tree is unveiled

See page 5 to find out more

Right: Ivor leads the Blackbird Leys Choir in a rendition of O Sole Mio, in the choir's first public performance on the leys. The occasion was the unveiling of the statue in front of Leys Linx



Left: A Closer Look. Guests at the Grand Unveiling take a closer look at the stainless steel leaves on the base of the the statue.



VIDEO MAKING

WEB DESIGN

SCANNING

GAMES

COURSES

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

EMAILS

GAMES

COURSES

SCANNING

Youth IT Hub
Phone 714492
About Joining

All Levels of Ability Welcome
Experienced Staff on hand to help those who not used a computer before
Phone 714492 for more info

www.blackbirdleys.com

BLITZ NEWS

Your Local Gateway to the Information Superhighway

New IT learning opportunity for FREE

Are you ready for a new learning adventure? Interested in improving your IT skills? Then the BLITZ IT Hub Tour is for you.

This tour is specifically for parents who would like to know more about the Blackbird Leys Community Centre, find out what is on offer for adults, children and teenagers as well as having the opportunity to do an online assessment of IT skills. This usually costs £10 but we are offering it for FREE .

The 2hr session will be running 13th, 14th and 15th June, mornings and afternoons:

So go on, take the step for a social and interesting opportunity to enter the IT world on Blackbird Leys. Refreshments and childcare will be provided.

Bookings are now being taken - hurry as places are limited.

Phone BLITZ on 01865 714492

Special Invitation!

Ready to start a new learning adventure?

Want a 'taster course' in IT skills ?

Then you are warmly welcome to a tour of BLITZ the IT Hub on Blackbird Leys

A FREE introductory course to open your eyes to the world of IT

Tours can be booked for 13th -15th June
 From : 9.30am - 11.30am or 1- 3pm

Limited spaces available so please call Christine on 01865 714492 or drop in to BLITZ (Leys Linx) to book Mon - Fri : 9.30 - 4.30pm

FREE CHILDCARE

Blackbird Leys IT Hub
Phone Oxford 714492
www.blackbirdleys.com



Like To Earn Some Extra Cash?

Leys News is looking for community journalists to gather stories and take photos for the paper. We'll pay £15 per item published and an extra £5 if you can supply us with a picture. Enthusiasm and an eye for a story are more important than experience.

Just give us a ring on 711756 if you'd like to get involved.

Computer Training at the Clockhouse



skills including, email, surfing the web, researching family history, working with spreadsheets and much more. If they can't help you with your query, they will be able to point you in the right direction and find someone who can help you out.

Money from the Leys Learning Communities has helped set up these sessions, but funding will soon run out. Volunteer and trainer, Gerry Webb, says "The sessions have been going really well and around five people a session are using the PCs at the Clockhouse. More sessions are needed to increase the number of older people accessing and benefiting from IT."

All sessions are free, just call in the Clockhouse either on Monday or Friday between 10 - 12 and chat to either Peter or Gerry who can help you get started.

If you are over 55 and have an idea for a project that could be run in the Clockhouse, we want to hear from you. Contact Jennie Travis at Catalyst Communities Housing Association on 712244 for a chat.

THE CLOCKHOUSE COMPUTER suite is open once again to Leys residents. Computer training is open to the over 55s on a Monday and Friday morning from 10am - 1pm. The sessions run as a drop-in, but one-to-one

sessions with a tutor can be booked. The sessions are adapted to meet the needs of the individual and the trainers can help people of all levels and competencies. The trainers are experienced in a wide range of

Oxford Blackbirds FC

By Mrya Medlock



WE WOULD LIKE to introduce you to the Oxford Blackbird Boys and Girls FC. You have probably seen them playing at the Park on Blackbird Leys in their bright yellow shirts and black shorts and socks.

Oxford Blackbirds have been running now for a very long time. many of you will remember Gordon Simmonds who for many years refereed games in the park. Gordon was with the Club for many years always wanting to help out with the games. Sadly Gordon is no longer with us. We are not sure when Blackbirds started but it must have been the early 60s. If anyone out there knows the exact date we would like to hear from you.

The club has teams from under six to under thirteen at present and there are eight

teams in total at the moment. They are always looking for managers for the unders sixes and under sevens, so if you are intrested please let them know.

The Club is run by a dedicated committee of around sixteen members. Most of the present members have been involved with the club for ten to fifteen years. Their president is Andrew Smith and the club thanks him for his support over the years and hopefully for many more to come.

The Under Nines play in the Oxford Mail Boys League. The Under Sevens and Under Eights play in the friendly leagues. Each team holds weekly training sessions. Our home game are played on Cuddesdon Way which has been our home ground for many years. The changing rooms have long passed their sell by

date (these date back to the early 60s) but you are welcomed by the large Blackbird painting in the main changing room and the tuck shop whose array of sweets and bacon rolls outshine any other in the league. The club has been in talks with the council about the changing rooms but things do not look hopeful at the moment.

The club has players from Blackbird Leys, Greater Leys and some from outside the area. Their social life is not bad either: they hold discos, bingo sessions and the main attraction is always their presentation night at the end of every season.

As mentioned before, If any readers can pinpoint the start of the Oxford Blackbirds, the club would like to hear from you.

Join us for a Prayer Walk through BBL!

EVERYBODY IS WELCOME to come to this event, you don't have to be a church goer. Members of other faiths are also welcome. You are welcome to bring children along too.

It's a chance to think about our neighbours and friends who live in BBL. We will be sending out good wishes for success, peace and happiness for everyone who lives in the area. The plan is to walk through the area in small groups. You don't have to pray out loud unless you want to, and there will be prayer cards available for you to read from if you like or if you prefer you can just pray from the heart. Also open to people who do not live in the area if you have friends who work in the area or have friends or family here.

If you would like to join in but do not want to walk then you are very welcome to help with setting up the refreshments, bake something for us or pray in the church while we are walking.

There will be short walks and longer walks available from 20 minutes to 1 and a half hours.

We will start off meeting in the Holy Family Church for a brief chat about the event and a prayer as a big group. Then we will form small groups of 2,3 or 4 and start walking. We will be praying for everybody in Blackbird Leys, for their health, success, safety and harmony between neighbours and families. Specific groups we will be praying for the elderly, young people, parents, lonely people, anyone suffering from illness or addictions and the victims and perpetrators of crimes.

If you would like further information please phone Anna on 07974 791319. Or email sasha@blackbirdleys.com

Prayer walk

3rd June 2006

4pm - 6pm

followed by a shared buffet dinner in Holy Family

Spindleberry Park

By Helen Mukholi

A QUIET PLACE to feast your eyes on nature. Lose awareness of the fact that you're in the middle of the Leys and that on one side the buses are passing and that Gillian Park is busy.

You can suddenly hear the birds and see real life ducks on a pond surrounded by rushes. You might think you were somewhere in a rain forest but no, you are right here on the Leys! There are newts and rats actually swimming in the water. (Or are they something else? - They swim better than the ducks making snaky waves as they go their ziz zag way.)

It is one of my favourite places and a convenient shortcut to Big Ben's boot sale at the Kassam Stadium's car park. Never mind the evidence of rough

sleepers, or the football that has found its way into the pond. It feels safe and totally unlike any other place.

The dark interior has the feel of a blanket covering you so that you can sort out that nagging problem and have that eureka moment. The branches close over you as the volume of the birds' songs grow. Suddenly you are alone with the birds and your thoughts in that dark interior.

A shaft of light reminds you that there is a sky above and that it is actually a sunny day. The coolness makes you forget that it is one of the hottest days of the year so far. The stillness is one broken by a duck a slight wind and suddenly a lady walking her dog.

You could have a picnic here.

You can now watch Helen's short film on Spindleberry park at www.oxfordvideoblogs.net. Click on 'Helen - Walk in the Park'

Spindleberry Park

A quiet place on the Leys.
You wouldn't know it was there if no one told you,
Right between BBL and Greater Leys.
Short cut to the Kassam Stadium
and the Big Ben's carboot sale.
The beauty and greenery
The sounds of the birds and distant lawnmower.
Dark under the canopy of trees.
The pond which had ducks rats or mice swimming.
The several paths leading in and out.
The Carving and other special features.
A lovely place.
Sit on a log. Gaze at the stream.

Want to Advertise in Leys News?

We have special rates for community and not-for-profit organisations. Call Phil on 01865 711756

Featured Local Business

Love the Dogs!

Oxford Greyhound Stadium has been at the heart of Blackbirds Leys for over 70 years offering great entertainment and excitement to the local community.

By Kate Hart



The Oxford Greyhound Stadium is proud to have supported over thirty charitable events in the past year including 'human racing' in aid of the Oxford Children's Hospital which raised thousands of pounds. Big or small, we have supported local community groups from parent-teacher associations to local sports clubs.

But if you're looking for a great night out with friends and family our Grandstand Restaurant and Executive Suites are guaranteed to impress. With a panoramic view of the track and tote betting at your table, you can enjoy an action packed night of entertainment, excitement and with a bit of luck, winning!

The unbeatable thrill of greyhound racing is on offer three nights a week so there is no excuse for missing out on the live entertainment events, here on your doorstep.

So whether you're after a couple of drinks with friends and a quick bite to eat between races or a full evening of wining and dining, at Oxford Stadium you really can have it all. But don't just take our word for it, go and see for yourself.

One thing we guarantee is that you'll "Love the Dogs"!

Love the fun, love the winning, Love the Dogs!

www.lovethedogs.co.uk

Oxford Greyhound Stadium: 0870 840 8903

Leys News is proud to support local business

The Leys does it locally!

By Phil Citrone

LEYS NEWS HAS always been a big supporter of local activities and events. We think there are plenty of great things going-on in and around the Leys.

In the spirit of supporting local enterprise Leys News is now pleased to launch the new business section of the newspaper and "The Leys does it locally" campaign. There are many businesses and services across the Leys and other parts of East Oxford that can offer residents a wide range of excellent products and services. We don't think it is necessary to travel miles to get what you need. With the ever increasing fuel costs why not have look to see what's on your doorstep first?

Over the coming issues Leys News will be featuring some of the best local businesses to see what they can offer residents.

There are plenty of great initiatives and new businesses springing up around the Leys. The Leys Pharmacy opened in April and is located at the back of the Spar in Dunnock Way. The effervescent Taofik Shodunke runs it. He always has a friendly piece of advice and a broad smile for his customers. Just next door is the new Indian Takeaway 'Chillies' that is due to open

soon. All the proprietor promises to deliver some real Indian treats.

Another important Leys business is the excellent Pathway Workshop. They produce a range of wooden garden products, the majority from reclaimed timber. They are a registered charity for productive employment and training for disabled adults between 18 and 80, with both physical disabilities and those with learning impairment. The people at Pathway are a fantastic group and deserve support from us all.

The area is also well off for leisure activities. Obviously there is the Kassam Stadium the home of Oxford Utd. Naturally the club has been devastated at the loss of their league status. However, since the change in ownership the noises coming out of club are positive and it seems they want to work more closely with local residents and other local businesses (see the back page for OUFC news).

Nearby the Kassam Stadium the popular Ozone cinema has recently changed hands and is now part of the Vue Cinema group. The Ozone Health Club offers a great fitness club and welcomes all local residents. Other attractions on the Ozone

Leisure complex are The Bowlplex and Gala. Moving further into Blackbird Leys we have the Oxford Stadium and it boasts a range of exhilarating activities including the Oxford Cheetahs, greyhound racing and go-kart racing. See our feature opposite on the 'Love the Dogs'.

Moving slightly away from the Leys there are some excellent retail parks/shopping centres nearby that offer a broad range of shops etc. For example Templars Square in Cowley offers a modern shopping environment and has more than 70 traders (www.templarssquare.com). Further down the road is the vibrant Cowley Road; an eclectic mixture of shops, pubs, clubs, restaurants and take-away outlets.

We believe there are so many great businesses and activities in around Leys and want to encourage everybody to give then try.

Finally if you are a local business owner, or perhaps about to set up a new business and are keen to be part of the "The Leys does it locally" campaign give us a call here at Leys News and tell us all about it.

To Buy, Rent or Auction?

By Phil Citrone

A run down from Leys News on the various options for retailers when choosing to sell online

NO WE ARE not talking about the ups and downs of the property market we are talking about putting a retail business online.

Why go online at all?

The evidence for going online is strong as this quote from www.BusinessEurope.com suggests:

"Three-quarters of small retail businesses do not sell their goods or services online, new research suggests. The report from online payment service PayPal (Europe) reveals that for 25% of UK small businesses with e-commerce enabled websites, approximately one-fifth of annual sales revenue is achieved through the internet. On average, this equates to £69,540 a year."

But as we all know, cash flow is critical to a small business and the initial outlay required for an e-commerce solution, on average around £2000 and monthly hosting of between £25 - £50 pm, often seems like a step to far.

Why not just go to Auction?

eBay and other online auction websites are without doubt a fantastic opportunity for ordinary people and small businesses to sell online without a massive

outlay and minimal risk. A business may well may ask "Why should we invest in an ecommerce website when I can use eBay?"

But there are significant differences between these methods:

Whereas eBay is generally used by retailers to shift one-off, end of line, unique items and old or over-ordered stock at a discount, an ecommerce solution will allow stock items to be sold at an attractive but profitable price. Some retailers do actually use both and just sell off their excess stock through eBay.

Bear in mind that an ecommerce solution will allow much more flexibility and control than operating through eBay. For example it can provide detailed information on the businesses products and services, easy stock & price control, allow special promotions, discounts and gift certificates and much more.

There are common analogies to the difference between online auctions and individual ecommerce websites: auctions are sometimes likened to the 'car boot sales' of online selling and the place for bargains, whilst an ecommerce website will provide a professional 'shop front' and allow

even the smallest of retailers to compete with their much larger competitors.

Why not rent instead of buy?

Retailers looking to avoid the risk of an initial heavy outlay for building a full ecommerce website could consider the option of paying a reasonable monthly rental fee.

Reduced set-up fees

There are now web developers out there who can provide a complete solution for a single monthly fee. These are often referred to as 'pay-as-you-go' or 'on-demand' solutions. They offer complete packages including design, build, hosting, etc for an agreed monthly fee and an agreed contract length.

For the small business this is an attractive proposition which allows them to enjoy all the benefits of being online without any of the large set-up fees.

For example, let's assume an agreed monthly rental fee of £99 and an average order value is £50. If a business takes just one order per day, their sales have increased by over £1,500 per month. At a margin of 25% their turn after paying your £99 per

month is £280, and that's just one order per day. If you take an average of 5 orders per day, the increased sales are over £7,500 per month and their extra profit is more than £1,800 per month!

Of course there may well be drawbacks to the pay-as-you-go route compared to a bespoke solution, so it's really important to check how well the rental option fits with your present and anticipated needs. It will more than likely be "out-of-the box" and may be limits to its functionality and its ability to integrate with certain payment gateways, or in its graphic design.

It's vital to go through thorough consultation process with prospective providers to ensure their solution fulfils all your business criteria. The provider should be happy to do this and describe precisely what the business is buying.

What retailers say about going online

If you represent a small retailer and are still undecided whether going online is right for your business, why not listen to the words of one entrepreneur who decided to sell his visor-cleaning invention online:

"I have recently taken an invention of mine to market, because it's a new item and as much as possible I wanted to keep control of how it was sold and for how much, I therefore decided on commissioning my own transactional website.

The process was a lot less grueling than I ever imagined and the results are superb; ease of use for visitors, great behind the scenes office functions to record stock level, sales, customer and transaction details are all built in and everything functions brilliantly.

The website is now 100% the engine behind my business. If I can direct people to my website I have everything there from initial product introduction, through a how to use section and go right the way up to the shopping cart for them to buy. If you think you've no need for a website, I'd think again!" - Paul Berryman, Director, Visorvision Ltd, www.visorvision.co.uk

Take Your Daughters to Work Day

ON THURSDAY, 27 APRIL BMW Group Plant Oxford gave thirty-two daughters of its associates an insight into the world of MINI production with the third consecutive 'Take your Daughters to Work Day'.

Designed to show the wide range of careers available to women in the manufacturing sector, the programme included a tour of the plant to see MINI production.

The 'daughters' also participated in team building exercises, including vehicle configuration and sequencing, robot demonstrations, spray painting panels, assembly planning and communication activities.

Marc Pastowsky, Director of Human Resources at BMW Group Plant Oxford, said:

"The Company believes in a diverse workforce and 'take your daughters to work day' provides young women with a great opportunity to have an insight into potential careers that the engineering sector, MINI and Plant Oxford can offer. It was fascinating to see the energy and effort the 'daughters' brought with them in working on dedicated engineering topics in a production environment."

Julie Cronin, Facilities and Energy Manager at BMW Group Plant Oxford, said:

"Manufacturing offers a wide variety of careers to women and it is important that young women are given the opportunity to explore all career options,



especially some of the less traditional ones. We hope that having spent time at Plant Oxford with our associates the girls will go home with a better

understanding of the many interesting and challenging careers that are open to women in this male orientated industry."

BMW Group Plant Oxford is

committed to the development of its young people and runs a four year apprenticeship scheme. The scheme currently employs 128 apprentices between the age of

16 and 21 years old, ten per cent of which are female.

Three MINIs, Ten Countries, One Giant Adventure

MANAGERS FROM BMW Group Plant Oxford held a welcome reception yesterday to congratulate a heroic team of drivers and their three MINI Cooper S hatches, who completed the final leg of a thrill-seeking adventure that lasted 49 days. At the end of the 8,000-mile journey that took them from South Africa to England across ten countries, they arrived at Plant Oxford, the home of MINI.

Having set off from Johannesburg on 8 March 2006, this overland voyage saw the trio of MINIs navigate the eastern side of Africa, travelling through Botswana, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt. Decorated top-to-toe in South African flags, the MINIs' were tested at every opportunity as they sped across Africa's diverse terrain conquering demanding mountain paths, vast expanses of desert land and gazelle-filled grassy plains.

MINI South Africa set the challenge for MINI. Diana Blake, General Manager for MINI South Africa, said: "MINI is a car that looks, feels and drives like no other. It's MINI's ability to take on any challenge that this journey has epitomised, demonstrating that we can take MINI, literally, to the furthest extremes."

The MINIs used to triumph over these extremes needed

very few modifications. Aside from raising the ground clearance to approximately 230mm, changing the shock absorbers and adding steel rims and robust tyres, the cars were mechanically identical to the MINIs available to customers.

A further requirement for MINI Odyssey was that each MINI Cooper S be essentially self-sufficient for the entire journey.

This involved the removal of the rear seats and interior cladding in order to accommodate the supplies needed.

Each car also carried two spare wheels, food and all sleeping equipment required by the team.

The drivers were led by Roger Pearce, Chairman of Motorsport South Africa and three-time winner of the South African Historic Championship. Steve Mearns, journalist and rally driver, took charge of the second MINI. Matthew Nash, a certified MINI mechanic and racecar builder, piloted the third.

Roger Pearce said: "For this trip to succeed we needed a top quality car. North of Kenya the roads just deteriorate into stony desert tracks and when we reached Ethiopia and explained our journey to some interested locals, they laughed in disbelief.

They were sceptical that we'd make it in anything smaller than



A MINI Odyssey: the heroic BMW Group Plant Oxford team pose for the camera.

a four-wheel drive truck, yet here we are! Our adventure is now complete and none of the MINIs suffered a single mechanical breakdown."

The team put the MINI trio through their final few paces as they crossed the Mediterranean by ferry into Italy. They then headed up through France,

ensuring they reached England on time. The entire MINI Odyssey was broadcast live via the MINI Odyssey website, www.miniodyssey.co.za.

Leys News: a potted history

Leys News is celebrating its 10th anniversary and over the last ten years the paper has changed enormously, going from a simple A4 newsletter to a full-colour bi-monthly. Here a few of Leys News' editors over the years share their views on the paper.

LEYS NEWS BEGAN in April 1996 when Carol Baxter (now Carol Richards) and Joanne Smith (now Joanne Willett) began work on a community newsletter.

"At that stage half the estate hadn't even been built" says Carol, "we were in the Dovecote, a purpose-built under 8s building, and yet there wasn't even a bus stop or a letter box on the estate."

"We wanted to get things that the community wanted to do up and running, and to find out what everyone wanted, we went and tapped on all the doors to speak to people. Once we had all the ideas we had no way of letting people know what was going on, so we started an A4 community leaflet."

"Leys News really took off from there and eventually turned into a community business. I was employed part-time and worked from home and soon local businesses got involved letting people know what they were doing. With one of the first editions I remember coming in and infecting everyone's computer with a virus from my disk."

"I went over to Ealing Family to see if I could get the files to open there and infected their computer. After I got the problem fixed I ended up working until 4am trying to sort it out and make sure the newsletter went out on time. It was the most stressful edition of Leys News I ever produced."

"Leys News is a great way to let people know what is going on and let people here have their say. I enjoy reading articles that local people have written and I'd like to see more community people get involved."

"There are a lot of changes afoot on the estate, the government has its own ideas of what we need and the people here have other ideas of what they want. Leys News is lucky to have gone on as long as it has and I'd like to see it stay as a community business and continue what it's doing. It's amazing in what it provides for the community, and when you think of how it started and has developed, and the opportunities it provides, it is a great thing."

"Al Cane took over when I was made full-time at the Dovecote and his skills meant the paper changed completely. I can't believe how it has developed and hope it manages to continue."

January 1999 - Al Cane

"My time at Leys News began in January 1999, when the baton was passed to me from Carol (then Baxter) Richards through to April 2003 when the company gave me a farewell do in the Church Hall. It was a challenging, stimulating and sometimes taxing experience."

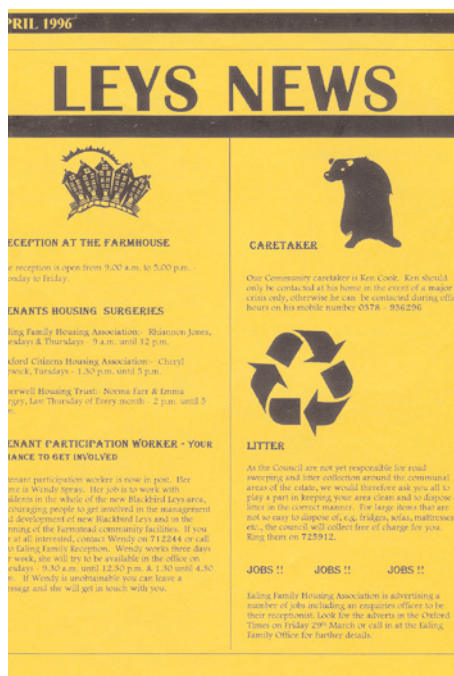
"When I started the company had no office or equipment to speak of, I recall being handed an ancient mobile phone by Carol and that was it. We carved out an office space upstairs in the Dovecote and there purchased the company's first computer and software."

"Paul Vernon, otherwise known as Stig, was the layout artist and Clive Jones from Wheatley printed the A4 booklet every two months."

"When the SRB regeneration scheme began we were able to move into the Kingfisher Green building and began to put together the foundations of a reasonable office space."

"I remember taking on the first student placement from the Oxford Women's Training Scheme by the name of Sasha East, who has gone on to bigger and better things with the IT Hubs in the city."

"I remember fondly my monthly visits to and chats with the late Molly Florey, who was at the time a parish and later city

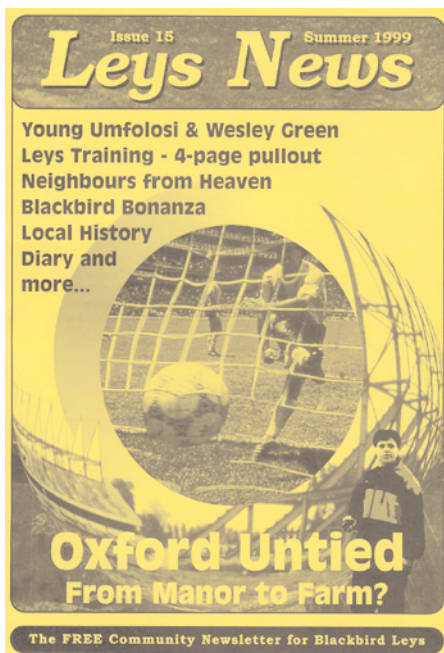


Left: Leys News is Born! The first edition, April 1996. Editor: Carol Baxter.

Bottom left: Winter 1999. The editor is Al Cane.

right: Spring 2000 edited by Al Cane.

Bottom Right: March 2002 edited by Al Cane.



councillor, and of course the first chairman of the company. There was also the big change of format to colour and newsprint through the Newsquest connection and much support and advice was given to me by Nick Murray at that time."

"Towards the end of my time at the paper my daughter Anna was born and along with my partner Helen, I remember all the support and good wishes I received at that time. I decided to leave when I left the area for Eynsham, feeling that a local paper should have local people working on it."

"I am now editing a monthly newspaper in Faringdon, Oxfordshire, the Faringdon Folly, where I live, and I can honestly say that without my experience at Leys News I would not have had the experience and confidence to do this."

"I still teach digital photography and imaging in the IT Hub and am still involved in the Leys Fair every year and I always enjoy being back on the Leys. All the best for the future of Leys News."

June 2003 - Etain O'Carroll

"I began work on Leys News soon after I moved to Oxford from Ireland, I knew nothing about the Leys and arrived for my interview on a sunny May morning."

"I can remember cycling between the trees towards the Dovecote, shafts of light breaking through the lush green of new





growth leaves, and thinking what a good vibe the community had, and how much it had to offer. Three years later I still believe this and I think one of the greatest challenges for the community is making local residents, and the rest of Oxford, realise this.

"I was very lucky in my timing in arriving at Leys News, all the hard work had been done setting up the paper, getting a premises and equipment and sorting out all the technical issues with the printers.

"I was able to concentrate on getting people involved with the paper and getting out into the community to look for stories. I really enjoyed it, meeting so many community members and working with volunteers on the paper and running drop ins.

"There were so many community initiatives going on, so many events, clubs, activities and plans for the future. There was never enough time to keep up with them and I was always amazed at what the community had to offer.

"I come from a similar-sized community in Ireland and there was nothing there when I grew up. Thirty-odd years later the big news is that Tesco have made it to my hometown in Ireland but there's still nothing for young people to do.

"Meanwhile the Leys has a new sports

centre, a swimming pool, a library, a community college, a brand new health centre, a recording studio!!, a multimedia centre, an IT hub with incredible courses, a youth IT hub, sports clubs - the list goes on. If you've got an interest here there's every type of facility to help you. There's every reason for the next Lethal B to be born on the Leys, for people from the rest of Oxford to start crossing that bridge and coming here because of the opportunities and facilities on offer.

"These are things the Leys should be proud of, taking advantage of and advertising. It's time the community stood proud and started to show what a great place it can be."

April 2005- Becky Telford

"I started writing for the Leys News when I moved to Blackbird Leys (from Florence Park) in 2002. Working as a volunteer was a great way to meet people on the estate and start to feel like part of the community. "I was lucky to get to know some brilliant people this way - people at Leys Linx, Blitz, BLAG, and other groups. It also opened my eyes to how much is going on in the area, and all the positive things people are doing to make the estate a better and more interesting place to live.

"Because I had been volunteering, I knew Etain was leaving and applied for

the job. I was delighted to be selected and started the part-time position in April 2005. The Editor's role is a very full one, co-ordinating the paper from the starting point of thinking up themes and article ideas to undertaking the design and proofing the final product.

"It's also very satisfying seeing something from start to finish, and getting so many enthusiastic local residents involved in writing and taking photos.

"I was later involved in doing writers' workshops with different groups from all over the estate, and getting more people involved.

"There's always room for more though, so get in touch and find out how you can contribute to this fantastic paper."

Top left: Leys News goes tabloid! Autumn 2000. Editor: Al Cane.

Top middle: June 2004. Editor: Etain O'Carroll.

Top right: October 2005. Editor: Becky Telford.

Bottom right: December 2004. Editor: Jo Stannard.



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The Children's Centre

What is the Leys Children's Centre?

Children's Centres are starting up all over Oxfordshire, with the Leys Children's Centre being one of the first. They will be places where families with children aged from birth to 5 years old can find out about what is happening in the local community. They will bring together services and families so that information and support are easier to access. For example, childcare, information about jobs/training/other services and people to talk to about these issues will all be available under one roof. There are also new services and new ways of doing things - and parent/carers ideas are really important.

Where is the Children's Centre in the Leys?

- In Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys, there are many places where you will find services which are part of the Leys Children's Centre. There are staff who can talk to you in all of these places:
- Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre (Marie, Debbie, Clare and Deb)
 - Windale School (Maureen Thompson)
 - Shepherd's Hill Pre-School (Jo Rooney)
 - Pegasus School (Liz Jones)
 - Orchard Meadow School (Tania Wiseman)
 - Blackbird Leys Pre-School (Sarah Pearson)
 - Imagine Co-operative Childcare (Jane Long, Liz and Doreen)
 - The new Leys Health Centre (Carole Roberts)
 - PEEP (Helen Stroudley)
 - Homestart (Judy Dawson)
 - Children's Centre Offices at Orchard Meadow School (Jenny, Mikko, Maria, Jo, Marie, Maggie and Lisa)
 - And some more to come...

You probably already know some of these places and people - if you don't, you can ask to speak to one of these people next time you are visiting.

When are things starting?

Some new services have already started up, such as outreach workers who can visit at home and a

speech and language therapist. Other things are about to start, including new childcare and new activities at Cuddesdon Corner Family Centre. We are also very interested to hear your ideas about what you'd like to see develop: we have already had suggestions around setting up a baby café to encourage mothers who are wanting to breast feed, and a lending scheme for safety equipment.

Who are Children's Centres for?

The Government has allocated money so that families with very young children (from birth to 5 years) can get good information, help and support to give all children a really good start in life. However families with children over 5 can become involved and we can talk to you about other services too.

Children's Centres are also for other people working with families, to share information and to find out what new projects and services are around in the Leys. They are a way for people to get to know more about the local community, to meet people and to work together.

How can I get involved?

- There are many ways of getting involved and there will be more as the project develops.
- You might want to use some of the services - you can always phone 779615 to ask for help or information
 - You might like to volunteer and help get things started - please leave us your name and a phone number and we'll give you more information
 - You might want to be part of a group which makes decisions about how services develop, through the Advisory Group or through a parents' group
 - You might like to meet up with other parents and find new ways of doing things - ask us about the Building Links Project
 - Talk to us now and help get others involved!

Jenny and the team

Parents, grandparents and carers getting involved

A very successful get together of local parents was held at Windale School on Thursday March 23.

PARENTS HAD MANY things to say about what they would like to see on the Leys. One person, a grandparent, said she'd be keen to meet up with other grandparents. She said sometimes she found life a bit isolating, being at home with children all the time. She found parent groups were often welcoming, but she would like the chance to meet up with other grandparents. The group agreed that people like to be in touch with other people in this situation.

Another parent said that she loved doing creative work with her children and she hoped there would be places where she could do this. A worker was able to assure her that there are such places on the Leys; Cuddesdon Corner re-opened in April and are offering drop-in 'stay and play' sessions where parents, carers and their children will be able to do just that.

Yet another parent is keen to have some more information about training opportunities. She wants to go back to work when her children are in school in a few years and she'd like help to think through which is the right course for her. A worker explained that the Children's Centre can help with things just like this; there will be a new training room at Cuddesdon Corner and the staff will make sure that it has lots of up to date information about training courses and help with childcare. There are people who can help with this, including Oxford Children's Information Service and the New Start Adult Guidance service.

Two other parents were keen to just meet up together and talk about the many ideas they have. They said that it was really important for parents to get support from one other and to have a break from the demands of young children.

Follow up meetings are going to be organised. An organiser of the meeting, Jenny Martin said, "it was very encouraging that such a good number of parents had turned up. They have already given us some great ideas to go on with, and I am sure that The Leys Children's Centre will be well used by local parents and carers. I am certainly looking forward to getting to know more people and to hearing about what they'd like to see for themselves and their children."

A Blinding Cuppa

Sasha East remembers early days at Leys News

I REMEMBER WHEN Leys News was a few stapled yellow sheets! It was mainly Parish Council news, and training information.

Now it's also more interesting stuff about local people and exciting events. In the future I'd like to see it coming out monthly, even weekly!

Back in 2000, I was studying a computer course at the Oxford Women's Training Scheme (OWTS). We had to do a work placement with a local organisation as part of the programme and I was offered some work with a website company. I didn't fancy it. It was all a little too corporate for me.

So I asked my tutor if I could find my own placement. The tabloid Leys News had just been launched a few months earlier and people had been invited to contribute to the paper. I wrote to Al Cane, the editor at the time. I told him I had these IT skills - and that I could make a blinding cup of tea. He invited me right away. They had just moved into the new offices at Kingfisher Green and there were boxes all over the place. I volunteered 3 days a week and started off filing and making

tea. I wrote invoices, took photographs, and went on to writing stories. There seemed to be food everywhere I went for stories!

I remember writing stories on the Bowls Club, the Blackbird Bonanza, which was a lottery for the Pathfinder Workshop and the beginning of Homestart. I also remember covering an electrifying woman speaker at an event by the UNITY Organisation. When Al Cane left, I edited the mock 'Sleaze News' which we gave him. I had fun back then.

About that time, I remember going to interview for a paid part-time job with a church. Two days from the interview I was riding home with my daughter when I fell from the bike. I went for the interview with two black eyes. One of the interview questions was 'How do you feel, being the face of the church! Of course I didn't get that job! My placement at Leys News was supposed to last one academic term but I liked it so much that I asked to carry on. I stayed six months altogether. I still volunteer on the paper, even today.

Besides producing the paper, I also delivered Leys News for two

years. I was the floating distributor. I used to deliver Leys News in the rain, the sun and the snow.

I remember delivering to this really angry lady: she didn't want any free newspapers, then she saw it was Leys News and she lit up, 'Oh its Leys News, that's a good one, I'll have that.' People do read it a lot.

What I like about the paper is that it focuses on the positive things about the Leys. But I'd like to see it becoming more newsy. I want to know things that concern me before they happen. If there's going to be a phone mast for instance, I want to read about it in the Leys News. It should always take a positive spin and not scandalise issues like other papers do when reporting the Leys.

Also, I suspect that Leys News may be 'cliquey', even if I'm too involved to really tell. It has opened up recently, but it can open up even further - although I realise its manpower limits what is achievable.

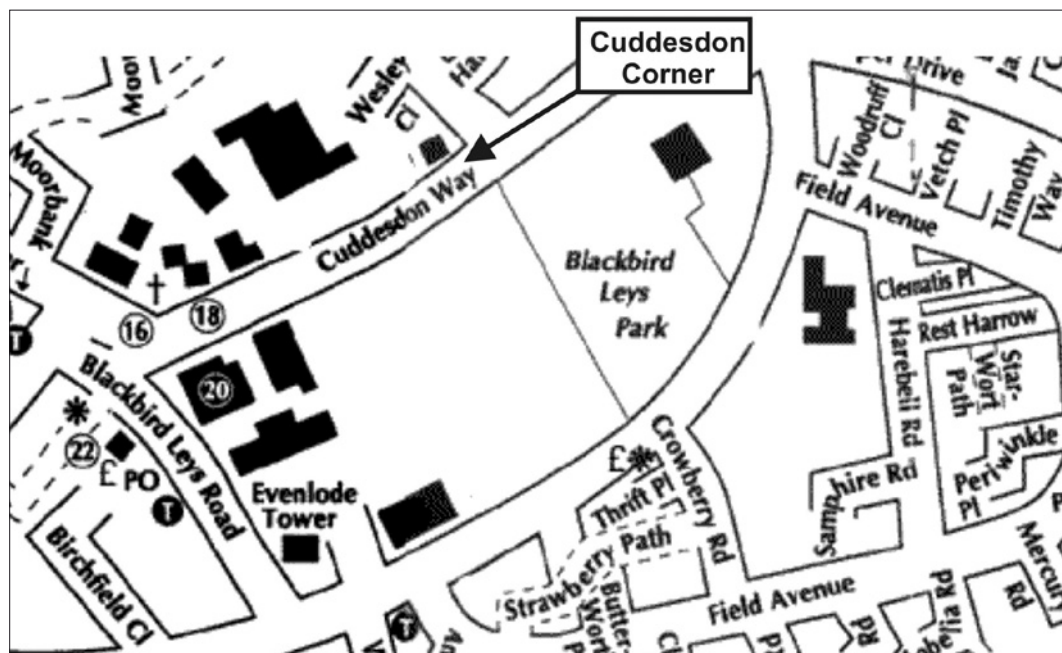


Leys Learning Community Update



The Leys Learning Community is an exciting two year project bringing together local residents and education providers to try out different approaches to learning and skills. Similar projects are also running on Barton.

Want to work with children?



There is a shortage of people going into child-care work.

- Are you interested in working in a crèche or nursery, perhaps as part of running your own business?
- Are you interested in finding out more about working in local schools as a teaching assistant?

We are looking for Leys residents who want to find out more about working in child-care. What we can offer:

- Information, advice & guidance - to find out the best option for you
- Support for getting qualified and getting into work
- The opportunity to work with other local

people to run crèches on the estate as a community business

- Relaxed & informal atmosphere, with children's activities available

There will be a session on the 13th June at Cuddesdon Corner from 1-2.30pm and other sessions will be arranged for later in June and July. We will probably be running a 10-week introductory training course starting in September.

Call Jim on 0792 9211 405 or pop into Cuddesdon Corner or Leys Linx.

Multi-media

The first courses developing multi-media skills are just starting, in a partnership between the Leys Learning Community and Oxford & Cherwell Valley College. We are currently running Level 3 courses in web design and digital video cameras.

There will be more of these and similar courses running in the autumn. Get your name down now! Call Annette at BLITZ on 714492.

Jazz Dance

Oxford Brookes will be funding a short dance course on the estate from September 4 - 8th. It will run in the daytime and there will be childcare. Book a space now; call or text Jim on 0792 9211 405.

Video & Web

Could your community group or organisation benefit from, or just enjoy making, a web site or short video about what you do? Whether you are a dance group, football team or parents group - we are looking for groups to work with on the estate.

The new multi-media hub can support your project. All we need in return is one (or more) members of your group willing to learn some web design and / or video skills. Or just talk to us anyway about how we can support your community group or project. Call or text Jim on 0792 9211 405.

007

This is a suggestion for a cross-community learning project to coincide with the "1000 years of Oxfordshire" in 2007.

It may also link into celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of Blackbird Leys - if anyone can confirm that something happened on the ground here in 1957! 2007 is also the bicentennial of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and there may be opportunities to link to this as well. Any attempt to define Oxfordshire straight away hits the problem that it is a county of such huge contrasts: urban v rural; town v gown; tradition v innovation.

Some of the contrasts are not very appealing. Oxford (and therefore the county) is known globally for one thing: education. Yet the county's schools do not reflect this. There has been an under-valuing of the other Oxfordshire, particularly the large urban population on the eastern side of the city. There has been no need for the universities etc. to invest in or value these communities because they recruit from a global market.

Oxford is a very small city. Yet, for its size, it is incredibly diverse. There are people from just about every nation on earth here. A lot of this is due to the universities but by no means all. Many of the communities on the eastern side of the city are working class immigrant communities whose presence here owes more to car factory than college. It is also these communities that lose out due to the myth of Oxford as a centre of excellence in learning. It may be for some but not for these...

The 007 project would try and capture some of this contrast. This has two sides. On the one hand, getting people from the Leys reflecting on what Oxfordshire / Oxford means to them, the journeys of their family to this place and presenting those stories and images to the wider world. On the other hand, it would involve giving local people the chance to encounter some of the other, contrasting, faces of Oxfordshire both past and present.

The aim is to have an overall theme within which a whole range of enjoyable learning activities could be part of and yet still retain their own integrity.

Some initial ideas - just by way of illustration:

Oral history projects: get school children to interview and photograph their own parents and grandparents, with the resulting audio and images being used to create pod-casts and a website.

Creative reflections: young people and adults writing poetry or short stories about their presence in Oxfordshire, or using other creative media such as art, film, music.

Hidden histories: questioning assumptions about "civilisation", particularly its links to slavery, a different look at British history from the Roman invasion to the Industrial Revolution.

Engineering the future: exposing young people to the world of science and engineering and Oxfordshire's position at the leading edge of research which affects the whole of humanity.

Worlds of imagination: imaginary worlds created in Oxfordshire contrasted with the real lives of local people. There are probably hundreds of different ways of doing this.

Any single element or project within the theme would have its own outcome. We would propose bringing things together on a website (and possibly an interactive CD-ROM). The multi-media hub at Blackbird Leys Community Centre, together with ICT facilities in schools, means we have the necessary technical resources to do this and do it really well. As an idea of what can be done even with limited resources, have a quick look at www.leysglow.com. This is a project from 2005 before the multi-media hub was set up. But the gallery of local faces and the links give an idea of what could be done.

Right now we are just sounding people out to see what they think about the idea. So if you think it's a good idea and would like to be involved please let us know. Call or text Jim on 0792 9211 405.



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Modupe Adefala

Pastor

Cowley Community Centre,
Barns Road, Oxford OX4 3RQ

Tel: 01865 402108
Mob: 07958 596340
email: pastor@wordfountain.org
web: www.wordfountain.org



Meetings

Sunday Service

11.00am to 1.00pm, at the Cowley
Community Centre

Friday Prayer Meetings

7.00pm to 9.00pm, at the Church
office in the Cowley Community
Centre



WFCM

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35th Oxford Scout Group



THE 35TH OXFORD Scout Group at Blackbird Leys meets at its Scout Hall on Sandy Lane next to the Greyhound Stadium. The group is celebrating being 45 years old this year. There are three sections, the first being the Beaver Scouts for six and seven year olds, the second the Cub Scouts for eight to ten year olds and finally the Scouts for ten to fourteen year olds. All sections are open to both girls and boys.

The aim of the Scout Association and its training sections is to provide activities and training to develop young people, enabling them to take a constructive place in the community.

The 35th Oxford Scout Group is run by a team of volunteer leaders and supporters, providing

weekly activities and various additional events and camps. They are financed by membership fees for each individual, and various fundraising events.

Their prime fundraising objective at the moment, in addition to the normal cost of running the Scout Hall, is their aim to replace the roof and thoroughly improve and update the building. To achieve this they need to raise a minimum of £10,000 - they have currently raised about £6,500.

The current membership is about forty youngsters from six to fourteen years old. The group has spaces in all the sections and also welcomes any adult support.

Triathlon Report

SCOUTS HAVE ALWAYS been known for their helpfulness and friendship. The 35th Oxford Scout Group have recently had a sponsored triathlon event which has not only raised funds for their roof repairs, but has also raised money for the Hearing Dogs Charity and the I.M.P.S, a charity which runs first aid and accident prevention courses for school children.

My Report on the Triathlon

By Beth Bowler

Cub Scout, aged 9,
35th Oxford Cub Scout Pack

I started my triathlon doing the swimming at Blackbird Leys swimming pool. I had a very good swim because I did not get as tired as I do in my swimming lessons.

There were twenty Beavers, Cubs and Scouts there at the same time, swimming with me.

I started my walking in Brasenose Wood - I went around the field. I like walking so that was fun. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts all came too. And I had a drink of Lucozade Sport, when I drank it made me want to walk faster.

The last part of the triathlon was cycling with the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. We all set off on the cycle track. We set off from Homebase, cycled down the hill and turn around just before the Long Wall restaurant, we then cycled back up the hill again. We had to do that twice, that was the end of a very busy afternoon doing the mini triathlon, which I did with the 35th Oxford Scout Group.

We had three charities that we were raising money for - they were Injury Minimisation Programme for Schools, the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf and 35th Oxford Scout Group Roof appeal fund.

While we were doing that, Baloo and Hathi, two of our leaders were doing a one kilometre swim, four kilometre walking and a thirty kilometre cycle - they did all of it.

Why I like being a Beaver Scout

By Jenny (aged 7) and Hannah (aged 6), 35th Oxford Beaver Scouts

I like doing string tails, playing games, performing circus skills such as spinning plates, I like visiting Cub Camp for the afternoon where we had a treasure hunt, made rocket ballistas firing fir cones, we also sang at the camp fire in the evening.

I like to earn badges at Beavers, like the Experimental Badge where we had to do lots of different experiments like find out why a candle goes out after it is out under a glass jar, and learn how to write with invisible ink - I think they said it was

lemon juice. We also made and played with home-made slime!

Another badge we have done is the Discovery Award where we had a visit from the local Police and have visited the Fire Station. We also had to say what happened to our hearts when we ran around a lot.

We have lots of fun at Beavers making things and playing games with each other. The best part of being a Beaver is we have lots of fun.

Why I like being a Cub Scout

By Connor H, Aged 10,
35th Oxford Cub Scout

I like being a Cub Scout because I like doing the activities and Cub Camps. I like it best when we go to Cub Camps and sleep in places where we have never been before. The best activity I have done is raising money with stalls. But I like being a Cub Scout best.

35th Oxford Scout Group
Guineaville
42 Fletcher Road
Cowley
OX4 2UF

The Beaver Scouts

Meet on Thursdays at 5.00 to 6.00pm

The Cub Scouts

Meet on Tuesdays at 6.30 to 8.00pm

The Scouts

Meet on Thursdays at 7.00 to 8.30pm

Mixed Heritage Group

STARLIGHT BLACK CHILD MIXED HERITAGE GROUP meets every Thursday afternoon during term time between 5pm and 6.30pm at Blackbird Leys Adventure Playground, Blackbird Leys, Oxford.

The group provides a forum for adults, parents, carers and black children and young people of mixed heritage. It offers the opportunity to gain support, information and advice and participate in outings and events.

The group provides a voice for black young people of mixed heritage, their families and friends. The group can also help to raise awareness of the significant contribution black people have made to British society, both in history and in contemporary Britain.

Grateful BLAG

BLAG (Blackbird Leys Art Group) would like to say a big thank you to all the people of the Leys who participated in the Community Learning Glow Project last year - you were our inspiration for the Glow Tree project. Thank you to sculptor Neil Wood for bringing the idea to reality, in such a beautiful way.

Thank you to Jim Barlow, Paul Isaacs, CDI and Fusion for supporting the project.

If you feel inspired by the Glow Tree to be creative, come and join BLAG on Mondays (6.30-8.30pm) and Thursdays (9.30-11.30am) during term time. Please telephone 07799893747 if you require more information.

Look out for BLAG in your local parks this summer and at Leys Fair in the autumn . . .
See Glow Tree article on page 5

Like To Earn Some Extra Cash?

Leys News is looking for community journalists to gather stories and take photos for the paper. We'll pay £15 per item published and an extra £5 if you can supply us with a picture. Enthusiasm and an eye for a story are more important than experience.

Just give us a ring on 711756 if you'd like to get involved.



CDI Summer project 10 year anniversary

10 years of activities for young people

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- For job description, person specification and application form please ring 01865 395 927 or email leyscdi@btconnect.com

Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks will be required for successful applicants.

CELEBRATING THE LAST TEN YEARS OF THE CDI YOUTH PROJECT

Tuesday, 20th June

A chance to watch the videos made, look at displays, hear the songs, AND have tea and cakes. Drop in any time between 3.30pm to 5.30pm at the new community hall in the Blackbird Leys Community Centre.

Then at 6.00pm come to the CDI's AGM in the new community hall.

- We'll get the boring business over quickly.
- After that there'll be some activities to get everyone present involved and thinking about what the CDI should be doing in the next year.
- Finally, the new Committee will be elected.

Refreshments available throughout the evening.

Blackbird Leys goes West

By Patrick Mukholi



IT WAS WITH great anticipation that a group of eight young people from the Leys made their way to an Oxford Youth Works organised camp at the Min Y Don Adventure Centre in Wales for a week in April. After a three-hour

journey, we reached the shores of Mawwdach Estuary in Barmouth. There was action straight away as the young people got into canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing, high ropes, low ropes, orienteering, archery and

a final night at a campfire. Nerves tested, fears overcome and skills developed.

For a whole week, because no mobile network was available, the only way you could communicate with the outside world was by a payphone. It was quite a trial for us all. However the lack of mobile networks made no one ill. The only consolation was the tuck shop opening times!

Evenings were filled with games and entertainment and some educational shows.

One staff as Trisha Gowthad, interviewed a Mr Bart Hollow Mayo, a friend of Judas Iskarot the Snitch, in the Min Y Don Tricia Show. Mr Bara Abus, a hoodied gangster was arrested and released in exchange for Jesus Son of Joseph.

On the whole it was a good time for the young people who said they want to come again next year but rather hard on the Oxford Youth Works and Min Y Don staff.

The staff had to invent new ways of getting people to breakfast by setting a ghetto blaster in their room and playing garage music at top volume. That taught them to come to breakfast as we heard cries of "Put it off man!"

Faith in the Leys

THE CHURCH OF the Holy Family Local Ecumenical Partnership is situated at the heart of the Leys (Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys), Oxford. Church members include a spread of men, women and children of all ages, and the Church is affiliated to five different denominations, Baptist, Church of England, Methodist, Moravian and the United Reformed Church. The building is regularly used for worship by local Black-led Pentecostal churches and the Leys congregation of the Oxford Community Church. There are good relations with the local Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart. There is a close partnership with Oxford Youthworks a national trail blazer in the training of youth ministers.

At the same time, recognising the multicultural make up of the Leys population, the Church would like to make links with other faith groups represented in the Leys and begin a dialogue with them. In February this year the Church was given a grant from the Home Office's Faith Communities Fund to begin the work. The outcome will be a Directory of local faith groups and a special event in the Community Centre celebrating the diversity present in the Leys.

If you live in the Leys and are a member of a faith group other than one of the churches located on the Leys, we'd like to know. Please contact Mrs Penny Wood either by writing to her c/o The Leys Linx Centre, Blackbird Leys Youth & Community Centre, Blackbird Leys Road, OX4 6HW, or by leaving your name and a contact number on 078-1757-3891.

WIN! Tickets to Macbeth at Headington Hill Park, Oxford!

Creation Theatre Company is offering two lucky readers the chance to win a pair of tickets to see Macbeth in Headington Hill Park. To enter please send your name, address and phone number to the Leys News office. Closing date: 12th June 2006.



CREATION THEATRE COMPANY is due to launch its summer season with the support of long term partner BMW Group Plant Oxford, the home of MINI. The beautiful arboretum that is Headington Hill Park is to be transformed by the Creation Theatre into the wilds of Scotland for one of Shakespeare's best known tragedies. Stunning visual effects and spectacular fight scenes promise to make this one of the best theatrical events of the summer.

In addition to Macbeth, this summer Creation presents Robin Hood (20 July - 8 September) at Headington Hill Park and The Merchant of Venice (30 June - 19 August) at Oxford Castle. Creation is also offering a number of workshops for adults and children and has discounts on theatre tickets for families and concessions.

For more information contact the Box Office: 01865 766266 / www.creationtheatre.co.uk

* Tickets are valid for performances from 2 - 30 June.

Church News

The Church of the Holy Family

Any enquiries to: the Rev'd Fleur Houston (774672) and the Rev'd David Parry (778728)

Regular Services: All are welcome to our regular Sunday communion services at 10.00 am - there is special provision for children. And if you prefer a more meditative style of worship why not come along at 6.30 pm, for Time Out - for those of us who need a bit of space.

On Tuesdays at 9.00am we have short morning prayers for anyone to attend.

On Wednesdays we have prayers for the Leys community at 1.00 pm.

Every Sunday there are services with Eucharist at 10.00 am; for part of the service, children may attend our lively children's church. At 6.30 pm Time Out is a short reflective service with different styles of worship each week.

The Leys Community Church

The Leys Community Church meets on a Sunday afternoon between 3.30pm and 5pm at the Church of the Holy Family, Blackbird Leys.

We are a lively family church which believes that people are important and Jesus can make a difference to our daily lives. Our Sunday meetings are informal and relaxed and include special activities for children.

We also support work in the local community including the Leys Youth Programme. If you'd like to know any details about the church, our community work or would simply like a chat then please feel free to phone Richard and Kate Colbrook on (01865) 714153.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Serving Blackbird Leys, Greater Leys, Garsington and Cuddesdon. Priest-in-charge: Fr. David Hartley, Tel 01865 779658.

Regular Services:

Sundays: Masses 9.30am and 6.00pm
Mondays: Mass 9.00am
Tuesdays: Rosary 7.00pm and Mass 7.30pm
Thursdays: Adoration 6.30pm, and Mass 7.00pm
Fridays: Mass 9.00am
Saturday: Mass 10.00am, and Confessions 10.30am

Sunday June 4th, Pentecost: Ecumenical picnic and afternoon service, 3.30pm onwards

Saturday June 10th: Family Barbecue and games afternoon, starts 12noon

Sunday June 11th: Special evening celebration mass to be celebrated by Fr Eddie Butler, and Reception, 6.00pm

Thursday June 15th, Corpus Christi: Mass in school in morning and church in evening.

Sunday June 18th: 1st Holy Communion Mass, 11.00am

Friday June 23rd: Feast of the Sacred heart Mass, 9.00am, and 7.00pm followed by 1st H/C party

Sunday June 25th: Walsingham Day Pilgrimage

Thursay June 29th, SS Peter & Paul: Day of Prayer For Vocations, Church open for prayer all day.

Saturday July 2nd: Summer Fete

GET 6 MONTHS FREE IF ENGLAND WIN THE WORLD CUP*

Join from as little as £29.00 per month*

Strictly limited to the first 50 callers only!!

20m Swimming pool, sauna, steam room, spa, 2 aerobic studios, spinning room, gymnasium, personal viewing screens.

Please call **01865 335300** for further information or to claim your '**FREE 5 DAY PASS**'. Alternatively simply cut out the voucher below and hand in at reception.

Name:.....
Address:
.....
.....
Telephone number:.....

Ozone Health and Fitness Club, Grenoble Road, Oxford, OX4 4XP

* Terms and conditions apply.



Cut out and keep

REEDS

SOLICITORS

SPECIALISTS IN CRIMINAL LAW

1 Cambridge Terrace, Oxford, OX1 1RR
(Located next door to the Magistrates Court)
Tel. 01865 260230. 24hr N^o 07900 901 318

GIVE US A RING OR JUST DROP IN



What's on Weekly

Age Resource Desk at the Clockhouse:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, 10.30am - 1pm
Computer access for the over 50's. Ring 717614 to book

The Barn Youth Club

Mondays 6.30-8.30pm - ages 9+
Wednesday, 6.30-8.30pm
Held at the Barn. 13+

Brownies: Thursday 6-7.30pm,
Holy Family Church Hall
(for 7 to 11 age group)

CAD Drop-In:

Drugs & Alcohol advice,
Tues & Fri, 12-4pm,
49 Barns Road (Ox 402919)

Dovecote Kiddie Club,

drop in Monday's & Thursdays
9.30 am until 2.30 pm
for 0 to 5 year olds. Telephone
Ruth Brown on 07985 637487 for
further information.

Girls Street Dance:

BBL Leisure Centre, 50p,
13-16yrs: Tues, 4.45-5.45pm;
8-12yrs: Weds, 4.45-5.45pm.

Girls Aerobics: BBL Leisure
Centre, 50p, Tues, 6-7pm, ages
14-18yrs

Dovecote Afterschool Club:
Mon to Thurs, 3.15 - 4.45pm

Dance Classes at the Barn:
Tues: 4-5pm, 5-11years; 5-6pm,
12 years plus. £3.30. Freestyle,
disco, street-dance.

The Edge - Youth Club

BBL Community Centre.
Wed, 1-4.30pm.
Drop in 7.30-9.30pm

Guides: Friday 7-9pm at the Holy
Family Church. Girls, 10-15 years.
Info: 455970.

1st Blackbird Leys Rainbow

Guides: 5-7 yrs, Fri, 5.30-
6.30pm, Holy Family Church Hall,
Cuddesdon Way.
Contact - Laura 0778 7528120

Holy Family Church:

Sunday service 10am,
with lively children's church.

Irish Dancing, Weds & Thurs,
5pm, Sacred Heart Hall.

Junior Edge Project:

4.30 - 6pm, Tues & Thurs, BBL
Community Centre (Supporting
black and mixed heritage
children).

Leys Community Church

Sunday service 3.30pm at Holy
Family Church.

Samba Drumming, Sunday
afternoons, 3-5pm, sacred Heart
Hall, ages 10-16yrs.

Sacred Heart Catholic Church:
Mass, every Sunday, 9.30am &
6pm

Self Defence:

6-9pm, Tuesday at the Barn

State Pension Advice Surgery:

Leys Linx Centre, 2nd & 4th
Monday of the month 9.30am-
12.30pm

Swimming:

Blackbird Leys Pool.
Mondays, 11.30-12.30pm: 60+
swimming (free).
Tuesdays & Fridays, 12-1pm:
Water Workout.
Wednesdays, 12 - 1pm:
50+ swimming.
Thursdays 12 -1pm:
Ducklings Parent & toddler
classes.
Info: Ox 467042

Weight Watchers:

7-8pm, Thursday at the Barn

Potters Court Bingo:

Every Monday from 6pm.
Contact Edward on 07913 924579

Leys Youth Football Club:

BBL Leisure Centre, Fridays, 50p.

Boys:

School yrs 3-6: 4-5pm.
School yrs 7-8: 5-6pm.
School yrs 9-11: 6-7pm.

Girls:

8yrs to 16yrs: 7-8pm
Wednesdays 2-4pm

Over 60s Club

Wednesdays 2-4pm,
at the Holy Family Church Hall

Your Councillors

PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Brian Lester. **Vice Chair:** Bob Avery. **Treasurer:**
Sharon Cole. **Secretary:** Helen Shayler. **Non position holders**
are: Lee Cole, Chris Hatton, Rae Humberstone, Cyril Martin,
Gordon Roper.

For further details call: 01865 734346, office hours 8.00am -
6.00pm, Monday to Friday, or leave a message.

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

Blackbird Leys Ward:

Lee Cole - Independent Working Class Association,
31 Long Ground, Greater Leys, OX4 7WS, 07771 996945,
lee.cole47@ntlworld.com
Every Thursday from 7.30-8.30 at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.
Rae Humberstone - Labour,
75 Little Bury, Greater Leys, OX4 7UZ, 01865 779678,
raehumberstone@btinternet.com
Every Friday at 4.00 at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre.

Northfield Brook Ward:

Stuart Craft - Independent Working Class Association,
Every Wednesday from 6.30-8.30 at the Clockhouse, Greater
Leys.
Jane Elizabeth Lacey - Independent Working Class
Association, 71 Knights Road, Blackbird Leys, 07947 225297,
cllrjlacey@oxford.gov.uk

OXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Leys & Lye Ward:

Val Smith - Labour,
4 Flaxfield Road, OX4 6QD, 01865 396073,
val.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Barbara Gatehouse - Labour,
51 Ashgrove, Oxford, OX3 9JN, 01865 741060,
barbara.gatehouse@oxfordshire.gov.uk



WHAT DO

AREA COMMITTEES DO?

The six Area Committees are responsible
for the following:

ABANDONED VEHICLES,
ALLOTMENTS, CEMETERIES,
DECISIONS ON PLANNING
APPLICATIONS, DOG WARDENS,
DITCHES AND STREAMS, PUBLIC
TOILETS, CAR PARKS, PARKS &
COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT,
STREET CLEANING, STREET
NAMING, COMMUNITY CENTRES.

SOUTH EAST

AREA COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Ring 252249 for further information

3rd July

6.00pm
Blackbird Leys
Leisure Centre

7th August

6.00pm
Rose Hill
Community
Centre

4th September

6.00pm
Blackbird Leys
Leisure Centre



Want to Advertise in Leys News?

We have special rates for community and not-for-profit organisations
Call Phil on 01865711756

DOVECOTE SUMMER PLAYScheme

3 TO 5 YEARS OLDS & 6 TO 12 YEARS OLDS

10am-2.30pm (3-5s) - 10am-3pm (6 - 12s)

Monday 24th July until Thursday 17th August
(1st two weeks or 2nd two weeks only)

£3.50 per child per day, plus trips
(check Dovecot office for registration day for trip destinations and prices)

Registration will be held at the Barn, Nightingale Ave, Blackbird Leys,
Friday, 14th July at 9.15am

ALL FEES WILL BE REQUIRED ON THE DAY OF REGISTRATION



Telephone Carol on Oxford 712299 for further information



Oxford United are pleased to announce a new partnership with Leys News



LEYS NEWS HAS been bringing news and views to the residents of Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys for the last ten years, and The U's are happy to announce that, as of this issue, your local football club will be bringing readers exclusive news, competitions, prizes and offers. Chairman Nick Merry told Leys News:

"We see the football club as part of the local community and want to make people feel that it's THEIR club once again. Over the years the Leys has provided players like Chrissy Allen and Jamie Brooks, and we've just

taken on a young striker called Billy Beechers for the coming season.

"We run soccer courses for children aged between four and thirteen at the Leisure Centre, and most importantly we know that some of our most dedicated fans live close to the ground.

"Our aim is to encourage people along to watch us in action, or there may be job opportunities on matchdays for local people. However people feel they want to get involved we are always pleased to hear from them and this new

partnership with Leys News is a great way to build that bond."

It's an exciting time for Oxford United as they start to build for the future. Jim Smith, the most popular manager in the club's history is back in charge of the team, with new chairman Merry achieving a lifelong dream to own the club where he started out as an apprentice back in the 1980s.

Leys youngster Billy Beechers will be hoping to be part of the success story after making the step up from the youth team, and over the course of the season we'll be following Billy's progress closely.

Season Tickets are now on sale for the coming season and represent great value. Call 01865 337533 to find out more.

And if you have a future footballer who wants to start out on the road to success bring them along to the Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre on Tuesdays between 4 and 5 for help from our qualified coaches. Who knows, one day they may be running out for the Yellows. Call Peter Rhoades-Brown on 01865 337523 for details of how to get involved.



Above: Oxford United's Chairman Nick Merry

JUNIOR YELLOWS OXFORD UNITED APPLICATION FORM 2006/07

To join the Oxford United Junior Yellows complete this application form and return it, along with an enclosed cheque for **£10.00**, payable to "Oxford United FITC". To Peter Rhoades-Brown (Oxford United Juniors), Oxford United FC, The Kassam Stadium, Grenoble Road, Oxford OX4 4XP.

COST OF JOINING ONLY £10.00!

Applicants name:

Home address:

Post code:

Home tel number:

Date of birth: Age:
(please complete for birthday card)

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- A chance to be a mascot at an Oxford United game Home or Away.
- Discount off soccer courses.
- Exclusive Birthday and Christmas cards.
- Exclusive T-shirt.
- Discount from Club Shop at the stadium.
- Membership card.
- Special junior coaching days.

T-shirt chest size: (sizes are approx as follows)

☐ Small (age 4/6) ☐ Medium (age 7/9) ☐ Large (age 10/13)

I wish to join the Oxford United Junior Yellows for the 2006/07 Season
I am happy for my son/ daughter to join the OUFC Juniors

(Signed parent/guardian)

We have enclosed a cheque for **£10.00**, payable to "Oxford United FITC" for the 2006/2007 Oxford United Juniors

I am between the ages of 4 and 13 years old
and would like the opportunity to be a Mascot
for Oxford United.

- ☐ HOME GAME
☐ AWAY GAME

(Please tick one or both of the above)

Oxford United F.I.T.C. would like to thank the Sponsors listed below for their support.



OXFORD UNITED CLUB SHOP NEXT DOOR TO THE STADIUM

Monday to Friday: 10am-5pm

Matchday Saturdays: 10am-3pm and half an hour after the match

Evening Games: 10am-7.45pm

New home/away and goalkeeper kit arriving mid July. Also new training and benchwear kit

Large selection of new merchandise arriving from end of June onwards

Find out more about Oxford United and WIN a new Oxford United Home Shirt!

Fill in and receive information on one or more of the the following products:

- ☐ season tickets ☐ corporate hospitality ☐ soccer courses
☐ sponsorship ☐ advertising

Each entry will go into a prize draw to win one of the new Oxford United Home Shirts to be drawn on Monday 31st July 06.

Name Date of Birth

Address

Post Code

Telephone Number

Email Address

Protecting your Personal Data

Oxford United FC process your personal data in Oxford United's database. We may use this information to contact you by post, telephone or email about our work, competitions, trading offers and sponsored events. We may also use this information for planning or administrative purposes.

Occasionally, we allow carefully selected organisations to contact our supporters directly. If you would prefer Oxford Football FC not to transfer information about you, then please tick this box ☐

Send entries to Lorna Gosling, Commercial Manager, Oxford United Football club, Grenoble Road, Oxford OX4 4XP.